SOCIAL STRUGGLES AND THOUGHT

By

M. BEER

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THOUGHT (1750—1860)

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

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(1750—1860)

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CONTENTS

CONTENTS

SOCIAL STRUGGLES AND THOUGHT

I

THE ECONOMIC REVOLUTION IN ENGLAND

1. Ascendancy of the Commercial and Trading Class

THE Revolution which broke out in the year 1642 lasted under various forms and vicissitudes until the beginning of 1689. It ended with the downfall of personal monarchy and the victory of Parliament. Since that time England has been a sort of a republic with a monarchial façade. The population was as yet comparatively small; it amounted to five million souls, of which about one and a half millions belonged to the industrial and trading class. Manufactures were carried on by handicraftsmen and in cottages, but

there were also big workshops, which herded considerable numbers of wage-earning artizans and formed, so to speak, large human mechanisms. They were all dominated by trading capital.

Even during the Revolution the trading interests, under the leadership of Oliver Cromwell, had begun to control foreign policy, and this tendency was strengthened in the course of the eighteenth century. Diplomacy and Parliament, Whig nobility and bankers joined forces, and with the assistance of commercial, colonial and war-like undertakings, monopolized extensive markets for commerce and industry. They fought successfully against the Netherlands and France, suppressed the industrial competition of Ireland, tried to nip in the bud the industrial ventures of North America, and founded the Indian Empire. They created banks, shipping, and manufactures, expropriated multitudes of small peasants and transformed them into proletarians, who, however, gradually found work in the building of roads and canals, as well as in the rising factory system. Their sole failure was the secession of the United States (1776—1783), for which the antiquated and short-sighted colonial policy was responsible.

2. Mechanical Inventions and the Factory System

In consequence of the extension of markets and the growing demand for commodities, large demands were made upon communications and production, which stimulated engineers, inventors and scientists to satisfy the needs of the market. Soon England was covered with a thick network of new roads and canals; the steam engine was improved; coal was utilized with greater economy in the metals industry; the spinning jenny and the fly shuttle created the modern textile industry. The whirring of machines, the glowing furnaces, the columns of smoke from the factory chimneys announced, in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, the advent of the age of coal and iron.

England was transformed from an agrarian into a manufacturing state within an incredibly short space of time. Factories and whole industrial centres sprang up and crowded out the old hamlets and peaceful villages. The population increased with unexampled rapidity; the towns spread and sprawled, swallowing up the countryside. In the year 1750 the population of England and Wales

amounted to six and a half millions; in 1821 to over twelve millions. In 1760 Manchester numbered 40,000 inhabitants, in 1816 140,000; Birmingham grew from 30,000 inhabitants in the year 1760 to 90,000 in the year 1816; Liverpool in the same period from 35,000 to 120,000 inhabitants.[1]

In the year 1750 imports and exports together amounted to about £20,000,000; in 1815 they amounted to about £92,000,000.

It was the industrial revolution which brought about this change in the scenery. The whole of humanity was gradually drawn into its orbit. Its effects proved to be incomparably more profound and more comprehensive than those of ancient civilization, of the Crusades, of the Renaissance, and of many political revolutions. It laid the foundations of a new social order; it created the means to abolish poverty and social oppression; it created the modern proletariat and modern socialism.

The creative process was as follows: economic need, scientific research, technical

[1] This phenomenon (rapid increase of population), in conjunction with the proletarization of the masses, greatly contributed to the spread of the doctrines formulated after Wallace and Townsend by Thomas R. Malthus (1798), that population grows more rapidly than the production of foodstuffs. The remedy for poverty was, therefore, sexual abstinence or limitation of the families of the poor.

inventions, industrial storm and stress, release of productive forces, new social ideas, social criticism, class struggles, strikes, demonstrations, destruction of machinery, attempts at social and political reform, social revolution.

The men who brought about this revolution and who multiplied the possibilities of wealth production to an infinite extent were mostly workers, artizans and persons engaged in small-scale industry. Their inventive minds had to contend with every variety of difficulty, but, driven by social needs, they continued their labours regardless of consequences and regardless of recompense. Those who contributed to the perfection of mechanical spinning were: Kay (watchmaker), Wyatt (carpenter), Arkwright (barber), Hargreaves (weaver) and Crompton (mechanic). The fly shuttle owes its origin to the watchmaker, Kay, and the clergyman, Cartwright. The new roads and canals were built by Brindley and Metcalf, two illiterate workers who could hardly read and write. The perfectors of the steam engine and locomotive were Newcomen (iron merchant), Crawley (glazier), Watt (mechanic), and Stephenson (cow-boy and engineer).

The rich financial results of the industrial revolution were reaped neither by the practical pioneers nor by the scientific investigators, neither by the inventors nor by the productive workers, but by the traders and moneyed people endowed with business acumen and enterprising spirit. As a rule they understood nothing about the mechanical inventions placed at their disposal, but they possessed the capacity of organizing for business purposes the productive forces that had been called into existence and multiplied, and the ruthlessness to subordinate everything to profit, which was necessary for material success. "The majority of the new masters," said Robert Owen, who was their contemporary and well acquainted with most of them, "have nothing more than business acumen and elementary arithmetic. The rapid accumulation of wealth, as a consequence of the development of mechanical inventions, created capitalists who belong to the most ignorant and ruthless sections of the population."[1] From their ranks were recruited the captains of industry, the organizers of the capitalist mode of economy, who regarded themselves as the architects of their own

[1] Life of Robert Owen, by himself. Edited by M. Beer, London, 1920, p. 177.

fortunes, who ascribed their success to their own energies, who wanted to be a law unto themselves and deprecated any State interference or any intervention by the authorities.

3. Smith, Bentham, and Ricardo

Both the interests and the essential nature of industrial and trading capital, as well as the thinkers who advocated the liberation of the new productive forces, came into conflict with the State and police regulations which fettered the economic life. The entire old order, which was based upon handicraft, domestic industry, the old apprenticeship system, restriction of imports, the open-field system in agriculture, revealed itself to an increasing extent as an intolerable fetter upon the new mode of economy, based upon large-scale industry and requiring technical improvements and progress. "Freedom" became the battle cry. Freedom of the individual, freedom of capital to do whatsoever self-interest dictated. Instead of the State and the Police, man's own interests were to regulate everything and stimulate everybody to do his best and extract the greatest advantages from his conduct.

The century of the industrial revolution

created Liberalism as the political and moral expression of the interests and of the mentality of the capitalist class. Their spokesmen in England were Adam Smith (1723—1790), Jeremy Bentham (1748—1832) and David Ricardo (1772—1823), who, although in their personal views and conduct very sympathetic towards Labour, as investigators and writers represented the interests of capital and of private property in general, in which they perceived the most stable foundations of social life.

According to Smith, labour engaged in production forms the source of the wealth of nations. If the earth and its raw materials had remained common property, the workers as the creators of goods would have remained the possessors of wealth, and all increases in value would have belonged to them. For the value of a commodity consists of the labour and the trouble that have been expended upon its production. As, however, common property no longer existed, the workers only received a wage, which ought to be fixed sufficiently high to enable them to support life. The increased value which labour imparts to a commodity falls to the capitalist, who places the means of production at the worker's disposal. For the

rest, the State should not interfere with the economic life, but allow self-interest and natural freedom to have full scope. Labour, Capital and Freedom are the conditions of economic prosperity. The State should confine itself to protecting property. As regards the relations between Capital and Labour, the former should behave to the latter with humanity and justice, granting good wages and proper working conditions.

Smith's principal work appeared in 1776 under the title of "The Wealth of Nations."

Bentham turned his guns both on the State and on the Communists. His fundamental idea was that every social and political institution should be tested by the principle: does it promote the greatest good of the greatest number? The State had never pursued this aim, but under the pretext of being concerned for the general interests, had had in view the welfare of a clique, of a small number of privileged persons. Such a thing as the general interest did not exist; there were merely individual interests, society being nothing but an aggregate of individuals. Communism would not promote the greatest good of the greatest number, as it advocated equal distribution, and thus destroyed the

incentive of industrious and efficient persons to productive labour. Nature had placed mankind under two masters: pain and pleasure, or what was useful and what was harmful. They tell us what we ought to do or avoid. Everything that created prosperity or happiness was good, and its opposite was bad. As society consisted of individuals, each of whom strove for what conduced to usefulness, prosperity and happiness, everybody should have the right to participate in the government. So far as political government was required at all, it should be democratic, but even the democratic State ought to confine itself to negative measures: to the removal of obstacles which hamper the individual in his strivings after happiness.

Bentham's doctrines, expounded in his "Principles of Morals and Legislation," published in 1789, are known as Utilitarianism, and exercised a great influence on the English Reform movement (1825—1832).

Ricardo was pre-eminently an economist. His essential task was to enlighten the English nation concerning the effects of the industrial revolution and the nature of value, price, wages, profit and rent, and also to explain in economic terms the antagonism between the

trading class and the landlords. According to Ricardo, there are three classes in society: capitalists, workers and landlords. The capitalists are the most important class in society: they direct production and constitute the mainsprings of economic life; their source of income is profit: the workers are only instruments of production, like the beasts of burden, the tools and the machines; their source of income is wages; the landlords, on the whole, are parasites; their source of income is rent. The interests of capital and labour are in the last resort identical, despite the fact that a rise in wages signifies a fall in profit. This harmony is only disturbed by the introduction of new machines, which, although useful to capital inasmuch as they increase its competitive powers, are injurious to the worker, inasmuch as they effect an economy in living labour and thus cause unemployment. On the other hand, there exists a sharper antagonism between capital and labour on the one side, and landlordism, protected by the corn laws, on the other. For the development of industry and the prosperity of the towns creates a bigger demand for foodstuffs, involving a continuous rise in prices and rents, so that a large part of the profits of capital and of wages finds its

way into the pockets of the landlords. This antagonism is deeply rooted in economic facts, as the value of a commodity consists in the quantity of labour requisite for its production and distribution (from the factory to the consumer). Every increase in the quantity of labour which a commodity costs to produce involves a rise in its value, which conversely falls with every decrease in the quantity of labour. The latter is the case in industry: prices fall because the new mechanical inventions diminish the quantity of human labour necessary for the production of an article. In agriculture this tendency is reversed. Owing to the development of industry, the demand for foodstuffs grows; cultivation is extended to the less fertile soils, which consequently require larger quantities of labour. Larger quantities of labour imply higher units of value and higher prices; and as the yield of the less fertile soils determines the level of rents, the rent of first-class land rises. The rise in the price of food leads to demands for higher wages, as wages are nothing more than a certain quantity of the necessaries of life which the worker needs for his existence. Demands for higher wages lead to disputes between capital and labour, to strikes, to mass discontent, to dis-

turbances of production. An increase of wages lessens profits, for the higher the wages, the smaller the profits. Wages and profits are in inverse ratio to each other. Moreover, the worker derives no advantage from higher money wages, as he is obliged to expend the whole of them upon food. Thus the landlords are the only class which derives a substantial advantage from the industrial development. Whence arises the class struggle between the middle class and the landlords.

Ricardo's chief work is the " Principles of Political Economy and Taxation," which appeared in 1817. By his definitions of the ideas of class, value, wages, rent, as well as by disclosing the class antagonisms, Ricardo paved the way for socialists. Social critics took their stand upon Ricardo's theory of value, and land reformers upon his theory of rent. The latter argued that, as the rise in rents was only the consequence of expanding industrial civilization, and was not due to the personal exertions of the landlords, the unearned increment of value ought to be expended in the interests of the community.

II

ENGLISH SOCIAL CRITICS DURING THE FIRST PHASE OF THE ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

1. Robert Wallace: Communism and Over-population

THE beginnings of the economic transformation had stimulated social criticism, and directed the attention of thinkers to socialistic problems.

One of the first of these thinkers was the theologian, Robert Wallace (1679—1771), who, in his book "Various Prospects" (1761), raised the question as to why man, with all his gifts and all the treasures of Nature, should still be at such a low level of civilization. Neither in morals nor in philosophy, neither in natural science nor in social life, are satisfactory results to be recorded. The question arises as to whether the evils and shortcomings of society could be removed by the introduction of communism. Wallace answers this question first of all in the affirmative: communism is not contrary to human nature, for equality

of goods prevailed in the primitive state of mankind. It could even be re-introduced into society now, although the great and the powerful who derive such enormous advantages from private property would offer the greatest resistance to such a transformation. Communism would abolish poverty, over-work, ignorance and immorality. Nevertheless, it is impracticable. The real obstacle lies in the rapid increase of population which would inevitably take place in a communist order of society, and eventually lead to a struggle of all against all, as the increase in the supply of food cannot keep pace with the increase of the population.

From this it will be seen how old this particular objection to communism is. Since the last quarter of the nineteenth century, however, it has lost all meaning, as since that period the opposite tendency shows itself—authorities, clergy, social reformers advocating measures to prevent the limitation of the family that is going on in all civilized states.

2. Spence and Land Reform

Thomas Spence (1750—1814) was the first municipal-socialist land reformer. Originally

a shoemaker, book-keeper and teacher in Newcastle, he turned his attention to social investigation, and in 1775 lectured to the Philosophical Society in Newcastle on the injustice of private property in land. He caused the lecture to be printed immediately, and hawked it himself at the price of a few pence, for which conduct he was expelled from the Philosophical Society. Since then the lecture has often been re-printed and published under various titles: in 1793 under the title of "The Real Rights of Man," in 1796, "The Meridian Sun of Liberty," in 1882, "The Nationalization of the Land," etc. The views of Spence, as well as of most of his successors, are: in the primitive state of the human race the earth was common property, wherefore every new-born child had an inalienable right to an equal portion of the soil. At that time all men were free and lived without political coercion, and without human laws. Economic equality and social freedom are consequently innate rights of man. As our readers know, these doctrines are derived from old natural law. Since the eighteenth century, since man has been incorporated in the animal kingdom and his descent traced from a species of ape, the human race has been regarded as a horde

of human animals, whose common grazing ground is the earth, just as the forests, rivers and lakes are the common pasture grounds and places of propagation of the other species of the animal kingdom. The natural state of mankind gradually came to an end, partly because of the increase of population and the quarrels and disturbances which followed in its train, partly because of the evil dispositions and coercive actions of domineering individuals, who appropriated a large part of the soil for their exclusive use. Similarly, conceptions of private property arose appertaining to those things which men created or considerably improved by their own labour. Thus wickedness and force disturbed the natural state of communism and created private property in the land, whilst man's own labour created private property in movable things. The old, natural order could no longer be maintained; a new order was created, either by express or implied social contract, upon the basis of which private property and the State were introduced, in order to put an end to the quarrels and disturbances and keep the violence and wickedness of individuals within bounds.

In this way middle class society or civilization came into existence. It has, indeed,

increased wealth and promoted agriculture, trade and industry, science and art; but it has also divided mankind into rich and poor, created great antagonisms and class struggles, and engendered avarice, ambition, egotism, fraud, exploitation and crime—in short, the whole social evil. A reform is, therefore, required, which would combine the advantages of the state of nature (equality and freedom) with those of civilization (increase of wealth, progress of science and art).

Spence perceived such a reform to lie in the municipalization of land. The nation should, through public meetings, announce the termination of the social contract, expropriate the landlords and restore the land to the parishes, which would let it to farmers at a moderate rental. The revenue derived from these rents would defray the expenditure upon administration and education. There would be no need to levy other taxes. On the other hand, trade and industry would be unshackled and pursued without let or hindrance.

These fundamental ideas, in conjunction with Ricardo's theory of rent, form the basis of the whole movement of land reform down to our own day. As the various tendencies of this movement differ from each other only in

the details of their positive proposals, no object would be served by describing these tendencies and their leaders : Ogilvie, Paine, Dove, Henry George, and their Belgian, French and German successors. Collectively they occupy a middle place between Socialism and Liberalism; they are social Liberals, and usually more Liberal than Socialist. This applies least of all to Spence, who was possessed of a thoroughly honest, proletarian and consistent character, and to the end of his days took part in all revolutionary Labour movements at the cost of heavy sacrifices and sufferings.

3. Godwin and Anarchist Communism

His contemporary, William Godwin (1756—1836), the founder of anarchist communism, was far superior to Spence intellectually, but far inferior to him in moral strength. Godwin was originally a Nonconformist theologian, but during his college days he became acquainted with the writings of the French encyclopædists, and was eventually obliged to resign his pastorship. Carried away by the first storms of the French Revolution, he wrote a two-volume work, " Political Justice," which was published in 1793 and attracted great attention. In this once very

famous work, Godwin attempted to disclose the vices and shortcomings of the existing social order and to indicate their causes, and further to demonstrate that social well-being could only be realized through the acceptance and application of the principles of justice. "Political Justice" is, therefore, a sociological investigation from the standpoint of ethics. It is divided into eight books, which are pervaded by the following fundamental ideas: the mightiest faculty of the human mind is reason, which causes the involuntary and voluntary movements of men, and supplies the direct motives for human actions—thus morals are based on reason. Politics (in the old Greek meaning of politics as social activity) consists of human actions and, therefore, includes the moral or unmoral activity of individuals, groups of men, governments, etc. Accordingly, politics as a doctrine includes ethics. The aim of mankind is happiness, intellectual and physical well-being, but happiness can only be achieved by means of virtue, justice and moral actions. Man is a progressive being and capable of the highest degree of perfection. Everything turns on removing the checks that prevent reason from reaching a clear perception of true justice and

making it the driving force of moral actions. Now as reason shapes its impressions from sensations received from the external world, it can only receive good sensations and shape them into just and moral perceptions and motives provided the outside world or social life is well and justly ordered. It therefore behoves us to reorganize social life upon moral principles.

The chief obstacles to a moral social life are private property and government. This particularly applies to property. "According as our ideas respecting it are crude or correct, they will enlighten us as to the consequences of a simple form of society without government (a natural or communistic) and remove the prejudices that attach us to complexity (i.e., where private property, State power, police, trade, etc., prevail)." (Book 8, Ch. 1.) The existing distribution of wealth is bad, and the reward of labour is unjust. Superfluity and hunger, arbitrary power and lack of freedom, pride and subjection are the infallible signs of the dangerous sickness of our social life. The regime of private property makes selfishness the strongest motive of human action. From this fact arise vice, ignorance, murder and war, individual and national

hatred, and thus man is precluded from reaching his goal of happiness.

Consequently the remedy is to be found in the establishment of economic equality, which the abolition of private property will effect. But this remedy may not be applied through force and coercion. The mass of the people can and must be brought by peaceful propaganda to the conviction that a society without private property and coercive government is possible. Once this conviction has penetrated, reason will have a clear path and be able to lead mankind to the highest knowledge and virtue. The future society will not be rigidly organized: the individual will have freedom of movement: everybody will arrange his work according to the dictates of social justice.

In the year 1796 Godwin married the pioneer of the woman's rights movement, Mary Wollstonecraft (authoress of the "Vindication of Woman's Rights"). From this marriage sprang Mary Godwin, who became the wife of Percy Bysshe Shelley, one of the greatest and most revolutionary poets of all time.

The books which Godwin wrote after 1798 are unimportant, and his mode of life signified a relapse into humdrum authorship. He outlived his fame.

Charles Hall: Expounder of the Class Struggle

The most eminent social critic of the first phase of the economic transformation was undoubtedly the physician, Charles Hall (1740—1820), who published in 1805 his book "The Effects of Civilization," setting forth the unbridgeable antagonism of interests between Capital and Labour, which he sought to prove by statistics. Hall's starting point is the idea of natural law, the assumption that neither private property nor political government existed in primitive society. Not until the rise of civilization did these institutions develop, dividing society into rich and poor, into exploiter and exploited, into masters and subjects. Wealth is power; it invests those who possess it with supremacy over the poor; it drives the latter into the factories and mines, and compels them to perform the dirtiest and most dangerous work. The workers create values, for which they only receive wages. From the distinction between value and wages arises profit, in which landlords, employers and traders share. The means which enable the rich to extort from the workers a portion of the yield of their labour is capital, or that part

of wealth which the employers place at the disposal of their workers in the form of means of production, raw materials and wages, to enable them to create more wealth. But the wealth that constitutes capital is the result of the labours of the poor.

But why do the workers assent to such a condition? The contract between the two parties is not voluntary. The poor have no choice. They must accept the conditions imposed by the possessor of capital or starve. The possessor exerts absolute coercion, and the worker is impelled by absolute necessity. Possessors and non-possessors, capitalists and workers are in direct antagonism to each other.

The average wage of the English worker amounts to £25 per annum. The working masses comprise eight-tenths of the entire population. Thus of a nation of ten millions of persons eight millions belong to the working class. If we estimate each worker's family to consist of five persons, we have 1,600,000 workers' families. Their total annual income is 1,600,000 x 25, or £40,000,000. What is the annual income of the nation. About the year 1780 the rent of land in England was estimated at £20,000,000. Since that time it has increased by about £10,000,000; consequently it now

(1804) amounts to £30,000,000. According to Adam Smith's assumption, the rent of land represents a third of the value of the produce. The value of the produce would, therefore, amount to £90,000,000. According to other estimates, it amounts to £112,000,000. From agriculture we pass to industry. In the year 1804 Mr. Pitt stated that the value of exported manufactures was £50,000,000. The home consumption of these commodities was supposed to be double or treble the foreign. These sums represent the annual produce of labour. Altogether they amount to £312,000,000, of which the producers, that is the poor, receive £40,000,000, or about one-eighth. Eight-tenths of the population receive one-eighth, and two-tenths of the population receive seven-eighths of the annual national income. And the former are the producers of wealth!

What is an injury to the poor is a benefit to the rich. The more civilization extends, the larger becomes the volume of wealth in the hands of its possessors. The augmentation of wealth is expressed in increased rents, in the growth of the national debt, which makes the State ever more dependent on the moneyed classes; in the multiplication of manufactures,

business houses, wharves, shipping, warehouses, roads, canals, imports and exports. The increase of wealth is accompanied by an increase in the number of poor, as the intermediate classes which had been able to maintain themselves to some extent above the poverty line tend to sink below this line. But the poor sink still deeper, as with the growth of wealth the pretensions of the rich and their demands for objects of refinement and luxury grow too, which involves an intensification of labour and prolongation of working hours. This accentuates the antagonisms to such a degree that it is to be feared that the poor will eventually try to free themselves from their oppressive burdens by force. Such an attempt would be answered by the rich with repressive measures. Such a civil war might lead to the militarization of the State, and perhaps to prætorian rule.

Moreover, the rich are ready enough to kindle the torch of war. The object of war is either the extension of trade and manufactures or of territory, or the exercise of vengeance. The competition among the rich of all trading and manufacturing nations for the raw materials and articles of luxury of foreign countries leads to wars which are perfectly

useless to the poor, although the rich always represent that they are engaging in war for the good of the people. The thirst for more intensive exploitation impels the rich to subjugate foreign peoples, from which further bloody conflicts arise. The pride and the aggressive character of the rich eventually cause them to fly to arms in order to protect so-called national honour at the slightest opposition which they encounter abroad. But everywhere and always it is the poor who have to bear the burdens of war. Consequently it is the rich who are so prompt when it is a question of attacking foreign peoples. Moreover, the rich are never at a loss for other motives to wage war. As soon as they perceive that the poor are engaged in asserting their rights or attempting to improve their position, some kind of international conflict breaks out, and the poor are goaded into shooting each other. It is highly probable that the war with France in which we have been involved for the past seven years[1] originated from motives of this kind. When the French people rose to establish political equality and to accomplish various economic reforms, the rulers and the rich of all countries

[1] Hall refers to England's war against the French Revolution.

were terror-stricken. They feared that the revolution would spread from France over the whole of Europe, if the French should be successful in their endeavours. To prevent this contingency the rich rushed into war against France, and compelled the poor to neglect all opportunity for improving their position. It cuts one to the heart to reflect on all this. The poor themselves were obliged to dash their hopes to the ground, and in addition had to assume the burdens of this terrible undertaking. The rich know full well the uses of war, and are consequently at pains to inoculate the school children with the militarist spirit. The history books are full of military narratives. They describe war as splendid, brilliant, and elevating; they praise the heroes and the heroic deeds, that is the bloody warriors, the shedding of blood, and the slaughter. But they carefully avoid depicting the frightful scenes which follow in the wake of war; the torn limbs, the heart-breaking shrieks of the wounded, the piles of corpses and the overcrowded hospitals. It must be a tremendous power that is able, in spite of all reason, in spite of all the feelings of human nature, to let loose the war furies over peoples and countries. And this power is wealth, capital,

which arose from the destruction of the original equality. To be sure, war is also to be found among so-called savages, but there it is caused by a lack of the necessary means of life, or by ignorance of agricultural methods which would have satisfied the needs of all the members of the tribe. But in civilized times, war is a consequence of the thirst for luxury, for superfluous and useless things, which only serve to heighten the oppression of the poor. And it is certain that there would be no war to-day if the people had control of the economic life and made the decision as to war and peace.

All this was written more than 120 years ago!

On the constructive side Hall is as lukewarm and wavering as he is acute on the critical side. His proposals were: nationalization of land, return to handicraft, a simpler mode of living, and abolition of luxury.

Later on we shall deal with the English social critics of the second phase of the industrial revolution. Let us now turn to analogous developments in France and Germany, in order to show the character of social criticism of the transition from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century in the leading civilized countries.

III

THE ATTEMPTED ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION IN FRANCE

1. From Tutelage to Freedom

FROM the beginning of the seventeenth century French statesmen had made efforts to promote the industrial life of the country and to establish manufactures. As the initiative came from the government, from the State authorities, these efforts assumed a bureaucratic and regulative character. It is true that the manufacturers received great support from the government, but they were also subject to severe restrictions in trade and traffic, in the production and distribution of goods. The entire process of production was regulated and supervised by the police, and was not allowed to deviate in any way from the prescriptions of authority. The manufactures established under the reign of Henry IV (1589—1610) soon decayed, and it was not until the last quarter of the seventeenth century—under the capable direction of the Finance Minister, J. B.

Colbert (1619—1683)—that manufactures revived, only to be abandoned to decay during the wars of conquest of Louis XIV.

About the middle of the eighteenth century the industrial activity of the country awoke to more vigorous life; local factories were established which have since grown into relatively large industrial centres and works: Creusot, the blast furnaces of the East, Firminy, Saint-Etienne. The silk and textile industry flourished in Carcassonne, Lyons, Roubaix, Abbeville. Paris, Havre, Rouen, Limoges became manufacturing centres. About the year 1760 the value of the industrial products of France was estimated at 930 millions of francs. Natural scientists, physicists, chemists, and writers began to take a lively interest in all industrial undertakings. The spirit of invention was aroused.[1]

Henceforth the towns strove for freedom and political power; the peasants for the abolition of feudal burdens and a partition of the land belonging to the Church and the nobles.

In this atmosphere there arose those social critics whose ideas we have discussed in the preceding volume.

[1] Germain Martin, Les grandes industries en France (1715—1774). Paris, 1900.

Not only social criticism, but the whole doctrine of political economy was stimulated and furthered by the intellectual reactions of the economic changes. As, however, its literary spokesmen either lived at Court (Dr. François Quesnay, 1694—1744) or belonged to the nobility (Marquis de Mirabeau, father of the great orator of the French Revolution) or were high officials (Mercier de la Rivière) and were, therefore, either predisposed in favour of agriculture or had no direct contact with industry, they created an economic system which grossly over-valued and at the same time over-burdened agriculture, under-valued industry and yet assisted the victory of capitalism, and supported absolutism while undermining the foundations of the State. An ingenious system full of contradictions, as was France at that time. We refer to physiocracy.

2. The Physiocrats: Economic Freedom: *Laissez faire, laissez aller.*

The physiocratic system, which was created in France in the third quarter of the eighteenth century, is purely middle class, and can only be mentioned here so far as it influenced the economic life and the French Revolution.

This system contains two basic ideas: (1) there is a natural order of economic life, (2) only the cultivation of the soil, of natural materials (from the Greek physis, whence physiocracy) is productive, that is, creates more values than the outlay expended on labour; agriculture alone creates a superfluity (*produit net*) and upon this superfluity or surplus value lives the whole of society. Let us consider these points more closely: (1) The physiocrats assume that there is a natural order of society, which regulates the economic life, and consequently does not require State interference and legislation. The bases of this natural order are property, security, freedom. The physiocrats regarded these three bases as inviolable human rights, and it is the function of absolute monarchy to protect those rights. It is clear that the natural order of the physiocrats has nothing to do with the old natural law, to which communists and social critics appealed. The physiocrats, as defenders of the middle class order, held private property to be the most natural of all rights, which, in conjunction with economic freedom, would assure the prosperity of nations.

The best policy is: *laissez faire, laissez aller*, that is, leave full freedom of action to property

owners, employers and traders. The interest of the individual will then coincide with the interest of the community. *Le monde va de lui-même:* the world goes along of its own accord, and requires no State interference. (2) Labour is only productive when it relates to nature. On the other hand, trade and industry are unproductive; their activity consists only in transforming and exchanging values. Society consists of three classes: (i) the productive (engaged in agriculture), (ii) the ruling (proprietors of the soil and high State officials), (iii) the sterile (unproductive, i.e., traders, those engaged in industry, free vocations, and in service). As agriculture alone is productive it ought to be the sole taxpayer; all the other classes should be exempt from taxation.

It is easy to see that, in spite of the high estimation in which they held agriculture and absolute monarchy, the physiocrats were the unconscious spokesmen of the French bourgeoisie, who were then becoming conscious of their class position and power: private property, security of ownership, freedom of commerce and industry, individualism. This is the proper theoretical achievement of the physiocrats; they influenced Adam Smith;

they were also called the economists. On the other hand, their contradictions were soon resolved through the French Revolution; the revolutionary bourgeoisie abolished absolutism and the rule of the land-owning nobility, with the assistance of Rousseau's ideas of political freedom.

From communistic natural law the bourgeoisie borrowed freedom and equality as against the monarchy and the nobility, and from the natural order of the physiocrats they borrowed economic freedom and the inviolability of private property as against the social reformers and communists.

IV

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

1. The Classes and the Constitutional Conflict

THE protracted and disastrous wars of Louis XIV and Louis XV, with England and Austria (War of the Spanish Succession), as well as with Prussia (Seven Years' War) and England (Canada, India), bequeathed a burden of debt which pressed on the country all the heavier as the extravagance of the Court, the rapacity of the Royal mistresses, and the bad financial management undermined national solvency and imposed ever greater demands upon the tax-paying powers of the masses. The State deficit grew, and it was no longer possible to cover it without the assistance of the bourgeoisie. Louis XVI (1774—1793), who inherited this financial distress, was eventually (in 1789) obliged to summon the Estates of the Realm. On the 5th May, 1789, they met at Versailles, but within three weeks the Third Estate and its intellectual

spokesmen were the masters of the situation. They transformed the Estates of the Realm into a national assembly, which they entrusted with the task of giving the French people a constitution, that is, to provide political expression for the new groupings of interests and powers within the nation.

The Revolution had begun. The old order was overthrown; the masses were set in motion; they stormed the Bastille, and compelled the National Assembly to transfer its seat to Paris. The whole world of ideas which had been created since 1740 was enlisted in support of the struggle. As a rule it is only with individuals that instincts, passions and personal interests are the immediate motives of action. In the case of political mass actions, on the other hand, which are preceded by debates and discussions, the instincts and personal interests are first transformed into ideas, into thoughts, principles and theories, which impart to the entire action a higher, nobler, more moral and more generally humane character. But so long as it is a question of class struggles, the interest of the strongest class triumphs eventually over the general principles.

The National Assembly spent two years

discussing the constitution. Meanwhile the country was reorganized, the Church property was confiscated, new paper money (assignats) was issued, revolution profiteers, speculators in land and currency, appeared. Great revolutionary ideas filled the minds of the nation, great profits filled the pockets of the middle-class commercial elements. The Constitution of 1791 faithfully reflected these conditions. It began with the Rights of Man; all men are free and equal, the object of society is to maintain these inalienable human rights. This sublime principle is followed by an enumeration of the Rights of Man—freedom, property, security.

The first principles derive from communistic natural law. The complement, however, is middle class physiocratic doctrine.

Eventually the purely bourgeois political standards were adopted: the Constitution of 1791, which, after declaring all men to be free and equal, divided them into active and passive citizens, bestowing the franchise only on the former, and making elections indirect, so that only the rich could become candidates. All that was required of the monarchy was that it should become constitutional.

It goes without saying that the lower classes,

which were democratic, republican, and enthusiastic for social reform, would not be satisfied with this Constitution.

With the passing of the Constitution (September, 1791) the task of the National Assembly was finished. Its place was taken by the Legislative Assembly, which was composed of new men and contained a number of lower middle-class democrats and Republicans, who began to urge a bolder policy, under the pressure of the Parisian populace, the growing scarcity, and the external dangers. On the 10th August, 1792, the revolutionary elements of Paris took the cause of the Revolution into their hands and imprisoned the Royal Family. This rising of the masses inaugurated the second phase of the Revolution—the most important in its history. A fissure passed through the ranks of the combatants; henceforth there was a gulf fixed between the bourgeoisie and the artizans and labouring masses. On the one side were the moderate Republicans, Constitutional Monarchists, and prosperous citizens; on the other, the Left Republicans, the social reformers and proletarian revolutionaries. With the growing privations, the social problem became ever more pressing, although its significance was

not understood by the leading Jacobins (the Left Republicans and purely political democrats). Various proposals and plans for social reform now began to be discussed in the Labour clubs. The shortage of food, the dearness, the dissipation of the national property (the confiscated Church property) drew attention to land reform, to the State regulation of food prices, and eventually to communist ideas.

The division in the revolutionary forces encouraged the counter revolution and its foreign friends. As the Legislative Assembly was unable to exert the necessary strength effectively to counteract these elements, it was dissolved in September, 1792, and replaced by the National Convention, which came into being on the basis of the equal suffrage of all adult Frenchmen. France was declared a Republic, the King was finally condemned and executed. The war against the united European reaction was continued with great energy, but any socialistic attack on property was likewise repelled. On the 18th March, 1793, the Convention decreed the death penalty for all agitators who pursued the object of subverting the property institutions. On the 31st May, 1793, the people of

Paris revolted, and on the 10th August, 1793, the Convention granted them a new constitution, which was purely democratic: it was the perfect expression of political democracy. Property, however, was declared to be inviolable. Robespierre, who was well acquainted with the various aspirations of the revolutionary masses, attempted, it is true, to draft a constitution in which the article relating to property was so phrased that even Socialists could accept it (" property is the right of each citizen to the enjoyment of that portion of goods which the law secures to him "), but Robespierre made only feeble efforts to secure the adoption of his draft. Nevertheless, the Constitution of August, 1793, did not come into force, the reasons for which we shall give in the next chapter. A *revolutionary government* or *dictatorship* conducted the affairs of the country from October, 1793, until July, 1794, with absolute power; raised armies against the European reaction, fixed maximum prices for foodstuffs, reorganized the system of higher education, introduced the metric system, but also suppressed the Republican Opposition of the Right (Danton) and of the Left (Hébert) and the drastic social reformers. Robespierre and his followers, harassed from without and

within, sought refuge in the Terror, the chief victims of which, however, were revolutionary workers and intellectuals.

Obsessed by his *petit bourgeois* ideology, Robespierre dug his own grave and that of the Revolution when he caused the most energetic and advanced social reform elements to be guillotined. When his destructive work was completed, he was himself overthrown and beheaded at the end of July, 1794. The *petit bourgeois* dictatorship was dissolved by the Directory, which deliberately inaugurated the counter revolution, disarmed the revolutionary elements in Paris, created in 1795 a constitution based on a limited franchise, and ushered in the period of the dissipation of the Church property and Stock Exchange robbery on a large scale.

The years 1792—1795 are important for three reasons: (1) they saw a revolutionary dictatorship; (2) the rise of social reform movements; (3) they were the cause of Babeuf's conspiracy. We shall deal with these subjects one after another.

2. The Revolutionary Dictatorship

It was stated above that the Constitution of August, 1793, did not come into force. It

was purposely suspended, the intention being that it should come into operation after the conclusion of peace. The Constitution was supplanted by a dictatorship. The reason for these measures is given us by Buonarroti in his work dealing with Babeuf's conspiracy.

Buonarroti, a democratic Socialist and friend of leading Jacobins, a man of great nobility of mind and moral purity, tells us that some of the authors of this democratic constitution were of the opinion that political reforms, however important they may be, were not capable of assuring the happiness of a people, unless they were preceded by a moral and economic transformation. They were further of the opinion that political democracy by itself would only benefit the rich. " As long as things remain as they are, the most free political constitution will only be advantageous to those who do not find it necessary to work. As long as the masses of the people are compelled by necessity to submit themselves to heavy and continuous toil and are unable to acquire instruction about public affairs, because their very existences depend upon the rich, it is the latter alone who will determine the decisions which deceitful governments artfully procure from the people." (Buonarroti, " The

Conspiracy of the Equals.") Although Robespierre and his followers did not intend to create a form of society according to Buonarroti's meaning of the term, they believed they would be able to effect an improvement of morals and a curbing of egoism, or, as Robespierre said: "We desire to substitute morality for egoism, legal justice for aristocratic honour, the rule of reason for the tyranny of fashion, nobility of soul for vanity." He thought that this object could be achieved by speeches, free-religious sermons, and police regulations. Until then democracy was to be suspended. Thus dictatorship was not a denial of democratic principles; it was rather designed to create the state of soul and the condition of mind which would make it possible to apply democracy for the good of all. But Robespierre did not see—and as an anti-Socialist he could not see—that such a mentality could not be produced by ideological means. He believed in the omnipotence of reason, and was not aware that the tendency and content of our intellectual life, especially mass psychology, are to a large extent the result of the social surroundings, and that consequently the chief task of a dictatorship ought to be the gradual introduction of consistent social and educational

reforms. Instead of this, Robespierre caused a great number of social reformist agitators and workers to be executed, in order that the dictatorship might be maintained. This tragic proceeding revenged itself on the *petit bourgeois* dictator. From the commencement of 1794 Robespierre's influence was unconsciously counter-revolutionary, just as every moderate social reform party, which has come to the helm in all democratic revolutions up to date, has slaughtered the Left revolutionary elements, and thereby prepared the way for the counter revolution. This is a terrible historic lesson.

We shall return to the question of the dictatorship, as it did not present itself in an acute form until the years 1795—96, during the Conspiracy of the Equals (Babeuf and his comrades).

3. The Constitution of 1793 and Social Criticism

In the year 1793 it was clear to those revolutionaries who were familiar with social reform modes of thought that this struggle involved a conflict between rich and poor,

between possessing and propertyless. Buonarroti, who was then in closest relations with the leaders of the Revolution and with the masses, makes the following references to this point: " In my opinion what immediately contributed to the creation of the Republic in France was the outbreak of the existing dissension between the supporters of wealth and privileges on the one side, and the friends of equality, or the numerous class of workers, on the other side." The attitude of the rich and the privileged towards the 1793 Constitution was, of course, hostile. They repudiated the notion of political equality. On the other hand, opinions were divided among the friends of equality (or the communists and social reformers). Babeuf, Buonarroti and their friends, it is true, regarded the democratic constitution as defective, inasmuch as it declared property to be inviolable, but they considered political democracy to be a good means for achieving economic equality. Through democracy to social reform, which involved the setting up of an intermediate stage, i.e., dictatorship. These revolutionaries supported Robespierre and the democratic constitution. To their left stood the Abbé Jacques Roux and the Hébertists, who aimed above all at a

revolution in the property relations, and warned the people of the illusions and the trickery of the democrats, including Robespierre, Saint-Just, etc. They attacked the constitution on the score of its anti-popular character, as it left the war profiteers, the land and exchange speculators, and the forestallers unaffected. Jacques Roux complained: "Freedom is only a delusion if one class is able to starve another, if the rich man, through his monopoly, has powers of life and death over the poor. The Republic is nothing more than a phantom, if the counter revolution manifests itself in the continuously rising prices of foodstuffs, which three-quarters of the citizens are unable to procure without shedding tears. The support of the *Sansculottes* for the Revolution and the Constitution will never be gained so long as the handiwork of the forestallers is not destroyed. The war which the rich wage against the poor at home is more terrible than the war which the foreigner wages against France. It is the bourgeoisie who have enriched themselves out of the Revolution for four years; worse than the landed nobility is the new nobility of commerce, which oppresses us and then forces up prices higher and higher, and no one can see any end to the process. Is

the property of a swindler more sacred than the life of a man?"

Roux expresses the deep indignation of an honest man of the people, of a brave communist. But was not the attitude adopted by Buonarroti and Babeuf more correct? Would it not have been better if all who were revolutionary minded had formed a united front in order to support Robespierre in his democracy and his dictatorship, at the same time going farther than he and inculcating on the masses the importance of social reconstruction? Robespierre had need of the masses, in order to defend himself against the *Gironde;* he would, therefore, have been forced to make social reform concessions, if the labouring masses of the people had placed themselves behind and not against him.

These are very important questions which do not admit of a ready answer. The best heads of the French Revolution (1792—96) were not unanimous about the answers.

4. Lange and Dolivier

In the first years of the French Revolution there lived in Lyons a busy writer upon social and economic questions who called himself

"L'Ange." He was described by Jules Michelet, the French historian, as the spiritual father of Fourier. A half-century passed before any details came to light concerning the enigmatic "L'Ange." Jaurès discovered him to be the German Lange, who, born in Kehl and educated at Munster, came to Paris at the age of sixteen and in 1793 was employed at Lyons as a municipal official. Jaurès, who studied Lange's writings, tells us: In 1790, L'Ange published a brochure in which he described the Constitution of 1791, with which he was already acquainted in its draft form, as full of contradictions, inasmuch as it began with the recital of human rights which are generally applicable, and then divided the citizens into the categories of active and passive. The possessors it called active, the workers passive, and yet it is the latter who create wealth. The property of the rich is nothing more than the superfluity which they extract from the working people. (To-day we call this surplus value). Lange looked for aid from the great friends of humanity and from the King. The subject of his next work was the project of an institution of agricultural joint-stock associations, designed to relieve the shortage of foodstuffs and to put a stop to the

activities of the forestaller. This project must have made a great impression on Fourier, who was then employed at Lyons as a merchant's assistant. Fourier does not mention L'Ange, but in the preface to his first book, "Quatre Mouvements" (1808), he admits that his whole work originated in the proposal for an agricultural association. Lange's leading ideas are: the total value of the cereals produced in the country cannot be higher than the total income of the working people; each worker should, therefore, be able to live upon his wages; as, however, this is not the case, the blame lies with the forestallers. No remedy can be effected by force. The sole remedy is to cover France with a network of agricultural associations. Every hundred families should form an association. The associations are to be established on a joint-stock basis, and the State will take up the shares by means of a loan. The advantages of co-operative production and of consumers' associations will prove so manifest that the rich will also participate in them.

Another reformer was the priest, Pierre Dolivier, who advocated land reform. His critical ideas are similar to those of Spence. His positive proposal is: abolition of the right

of inheritance and equal distribution of the large estates among the peasants. His book, published in 1794, was entitled "*Essai sur la justice primitive.*"

V

THE CONSPIRACY OF BABEUF AND HIS COMRADES

1. Causes, Objects

ROBESPIERRE'S fall at the end of July, 1794, the domination of the Convention by counter-revolutionary elements, the consequent acceptance of the anti-democratic Constitution of 1795, could not but induce all social reformers and Jacobins who remained true to the Revolution to offer a united front to the Directory. Both revolutionary sections co-operated; in peaceful discussions the Jacobins were convinced that democracy was impossible without an economic transformation, and that the political revolution would have to be supplemented by the abolition of the old property relations, the institution of common property in the soil, general obligation to labour, and social equality. A virtuous and simple mode of life, the education of the young into capable citizens, the stamping out of egoism and the lust for power

were to consolidate the foundations of the new society, and make France a model nation for all the peoples. Although this conspiracy is connected with the name of Babeuf,[1] the latter was not its intellectual author and leader. He was only its public spokesman and writer. The proper originator of this movement was Buonarroti.

2. Filippo Buonarroti and the Revolutionary Dictatorship

We are now concerned with a man who may be ranked among the greatest of his time. He was rich in knowledge, but richer still in the attributes of character. He may be described as a social-revolutionary Francis d'Assisi. His book, "Conspiration pour l'égalite" (Brussels, 1828) is the description of that conspiracy. It is written in a fascinating style which no translation can reproduce. Buonarroti (or Buonarotti) was descended from an Italian family which gave the great

[1] Francois Noel Babeuf, who as a land reformer adopted the Roman name of Gracchus, was born in 1764, and acquired by self-instruction considerable stores of general knowledge. He served the French Revolution with mouth and pen, advocated democracy and land reform in the "Tribune du peuple," and died as a social-democratic martyr on the 24th May, 1797.

Michelangelo to the world. He was born in Pisa in 1760, and at an early age was promoted to high official honours, which, however, he gave up at the outbreak of the French Revolution. At first he was active in Corsica (1790—1792), where the young Napoleon Bonaparte was attached to him as an admiring friend, then he repaired to Paris, where the Convention entrusted him with various missions. He became an intimate friend of Robespierre, and received from the Convention the right of French citizenship. Unlike Babeuf, who underwent various changes of opinion, Buonarroti consistently adhered to the viewpoint that in the years 1789—1792 the aims of the French Revolution were confined to the establishment of constitutional monarchy and a middle-class anti-landlord government, whereas from 1792 onwards the struggle between the possessing class and the propertyless came to the front, and that, whilst the Constitution of 1793 was defective from the social standpoint, its democratic provisions were likely to be helpful to the propertyless in their struggle, provided the latter were educated in communism. Soon after the fall of Robespierre, Buonarroti founded the Union of the Pantheon (so-called after the meeting-place of

the Union), which grew so rapidly that in 1796 it numbered 17,000 members, and gained friends among the garrisons of Paris.

The president of the Union was Buonarroti. He gathered around him the ablest spirits, formed a secret executive committee, in order to prepare the rising to overthrow the Directory and abolish the Constitution of 1795. The executive committee directed its immediate attention to the question as to what political form should be introduced when the Directory was overthrown. They were all agreed that the Constitution of 1793 could not be put into force immediately. Buonarroti writes upon this point as follows:

"The experiences of the French Revolution, and especially the disunion and failures of the Convention, have shown sufficiently that a people whose opinions have been formed under the domination of inequality and despotism are ill-equipped, in a period of revolutionary reconstruction, to elect the men who are to be entrusted with the task of guiding and completing the Revolution. This difficult task can only be entrusted to men at once wise and courageous, patriotic and benevolent, who have long investigated the causes of social evils and emancipated themselves from prejudices and

common vices, whose knowledge is in advance of their contemporaries, and who, despising gold and the general titles of honour, seek their happiness in procuring the victory of equality. Perhaps it might be necessary at the commencement of a political revolution, out of respect for real democracy, to place less stress upon votes than upon putting the supreme power into wise and strong revolutionary hands."

After long discussion, in which the advantages and drawbacks of dictatorship were considered, the executive committee came to the conclusion that, after the abolition of the tyranny, the insurrectionists of Paris and of the departments should elect a national assembly which would be invested with the supreme power. The secret executive committee should, however, remain in existence, to institute inquiries concerning the candidates and otherwise supervise the conduct of the new assembly.

In these ideas and considerations lay the origin of the notion of revolutionary dictatorship.

3. The Upshot of the Conspiracy

Among the secret agents of the conspiracy

was a certain Captain Grisel, who betrayed the whole plot to the Directory. The War Minister, Carnot, instructed the young general, Napoleon Bonaparte, to dissolve the Union of the Pantheon and to arrest the leading members. At the end of February, 1796, he dissolved the Union; on the 10th May the leaders were arrested. The investigation lasted for a period of eleven months. Fearing a rising on the part of the working population of Paris, the Directory had the prisoners transferred to the provincial town of Vendôme. Here also sat the Court, which condemned Babeuf and Darthé to death, and Buonarroti and others to banishment, on the 26th May, 1797. Babeuf and Darthé at once attempted to make an end of their lives by a stab from a dagger, but were prevented from doing so, and, bleeding from their wounds, were hustled out of the Court of Justice, in order to die under the guillotine the following morning.

The traitor, Grisel, was later shot by Camille, the eldest son of Babeuf.

Buonarroti remained in prison in Cherbourg, where his erstwhile admirer and "youthful friend," Napoleon, now become First Consul and the real ruler of France, offered him a high post in 1801. Buonarroti contemptuously

rejected this offer. In 1807 he was set at liberty and lived on the south-western frontier of France, where he consorted with the Italian revolutionaries; then he settled in Switzerland, and picked up a scanty livelihood by teaching music and languages; expelled from Switzerland, he repaired to Brussels, where, in 1828, he published his work on the conspiracy and the trial of Babeuf and his comrades. The book exercised a strong influence upon the revolutionary-communistic movement during the years 1828—1840. After the July Revolution (1830) Buonarroti returned to Paris, where he was venerated as a saint by the revolutionary movement. One of his disciples was August Blanqui. In 1834 the police attempted to expel Buonarroti from France, but the citizenship bestowed on him by the Convention protected the noble old man from banishment. He then lived in Paris as a music teacher, under the pseudonym of Raymond, and died in 1837.

VI

REACTION UPON GERMANY

1. Economic Revival and Political Oppression

IN the first years of the eighteenth century the devastations of the Thirty Years' War were still painfully visible in the towns and on the countryside throughout Germany. Entire villages lay waste in Central and Southern Germany; many towns were almost depopulated; commerce and industry seemed to be smitten with decay; only Hamburg and Leipzig were animated by the commercial spirit; they—and not the numerous courts of the secular and spiritual princes—were the oases in the desert of national life. The much-tried German people had scarcely healed its wounds when the extravagance of the princes, the rapacity of the landlords, and the thirst for authority and pedantry of the officials oppressed it with burdens and interrupted the healing process. Things did not improve until after the middle of the eighteenth century. The industrial revolution in England and

France, the prosperity of agriculture in England and Holland, the French literature of enlightenment, and the elevation of political economy into a position of honour reacted favourably, both materially and intellectually, upon Germany. Partly through the helping hand of governments, especially those of Frederick the Great, who was familiar with Western European civilization, partly through the reinvigorated initiative of the German farming, industrial and mercantile classes, economic life revived; new methods of production were introduced, linen and silk manufactures were encouraged, and agriculture began to apply new methods of cultivation. In the last decades of the eighteenth century agricultural associations and journals came into existence (" Breslauer Oekonomische Nachrichten," " Berliner Landwirtschaftsbibliothek," " Journal fuer Gartenkunst " and even an " Oekonom Enzyklopædie ").

In Hamburg a society for the promotion of the arts and useful industries was founded. Shipping had for some time been in a flourishing state in that port, especially since the American Declaration of Independence (1776), as the Americans avoided English ports and sought German ports. About two thousand

ships entered and left the port of Hamburg each year, of which only 150-160 were Hamburg vessels; likewise Hamburg developed a marine insurance business which issued policies covering risks amounting to between ten and twenty millions of pounds sterling.

The seats of the linen manufactures were Silesia, Oberlausitz, Bielefeld, and the Osnabrueck and Minden districts. Germany's linen output was estimated at twenty millions of thalers annually (about (£3,000,000).

More than interesting are the hints given by the ever-readable Justus Moser. He complains (1769) about the decay of German handicraft in consequence of the competition of the factories. "This evil," he says, "cannot be obviated, or rich people must become handicraftsmen. Like the gold and silversmith, the hat and stocking manufacturer in many places dwells in a palace, and enjoys all the advantages which experience, learning, ostentation, and wealth can bestow: why should not a master hatter or a master knitter, if he is as good at his craft as the former, be able to attain to the same repute."[1]

Suggestive, too, is the description given by

[1] Justus Moser, Auswahl aus seinen Schriften, 1914, p. 44 et seq. 65 et seq.

Georg Forster (1790) of the factory system in Aachen and Burscheid: "The oppression and hatred of the Protestants is the reason why so many factories are found outside Aachen. Burscheid, where the hot springs are, has large cloth and knitting factories. . . . Likewise Vaals. How it gladdens me to hear Elberfeld, Vaals and Smyrna mentioned together. For the cloth made here is transported to Trieste and Venice, and thence to Turkey. The quality is excellent, and only Spanish wool of the finest quality is used. . ."[1]

The mines and smelting works of Silesia made progress; the annual value of the finished goods was computed at 12 to 14 million thalers (nearly £2,000,000).

About the year 1780 Saxony was producing 70,000 dozen pairs of stockings and gloves. The annual turnover of the Leipzig fair was estimated at 18 millions of thalers (£2,500,000).

Taking all in all, the last quarter of the eighteenth century coincided with a rehabilitation of the indestructible energy and pushfulness of German economic life.[2] And this economic enterprise and creative activity

[1] Georg Forster, Briefe und Tagebucher, 1790, Edition Leitzmann, Halle 1893, pp. 17, 139.

[2] See Biedermann, Deutschland im 18. Jahrhundert, Vol. 1; likewise Jaurès, La Convention, Vol. 1.

corresponded to an outbreak of intellectual energy in literature, theology and philosophy, which was marked by a progressive and liberal spirit. The political backwardness, the oppression and servitude in which the petty princes and the nobles held the people were felt all the more painfully by their poets and thinkers. One of the wisest and most cultivated political thinkers of that time, Chr. M. Wieland, expressed this feeling in the "Goldenen Spiegel" when he said: "In the eyes of the petty tyrants the people have no rights and the princes no duties. The princes treat the people as a heap of animated machines, which have to work for them and have no right to rest, accommodation and pleasure. Difficult as it is to imagine such an unnatural way of thinking, nothing is more certain than that the princes have succeeded in regarding themselves as a class of higher beings . . . to serve whose caprices Nature exists, to whom all is permitted, and whom nobody may call to account. The servitude of the subjects goes so far that when in exceptional cases they are granted the usual rights of mankind, this is regarded as an undeserved favour." Not a stroke is laid on too thick in this doleful picture. Wieland may have had South

German conditions chiefly in mind, but even in Prussia, under Frederick the Great, any outspoken political criticism was out of the question. The courageous Lessing wrote touching this point to Nicolai: "Let anybody in Berlin just try to tell the noble Court mob the truth, let anyone in Berlin try to raise his voice in favour of the rights of subjects against extortion and despotism, as is now being done even in France and Denmark, and you will soon see which is the most slavish country in Europe in the present time."

From the antagonism between economic striving and political oppression German classical literature drew a great part of its strength. It is, however, chiefly middle-class in character. Schiller is its classical representative; he was the soul of the last quarter of the eighteenth century, which witnessed the birth of the modern German bourgeoisie, whereas Goethe's mind ranged through entire centuries, from the Renaissance until far into the nineteenth century. Other thinkers, like Winckelmann, devoted themselves entirely to aesthetics, and were unable to break away from the Renaissance. The whole of the intellectual labours of Western Europe since the fifteenth century were compressed within a few decades

in the German realm, and it seemed as if every ounce of strength was being exerted to repair the neglect of centuries. Schiller also occupied himself with aesthetic problems, although he remained the prototype of a moral middle-class man, perceiving " in the beneficent middle order the creator of our entire civilization, which is preparing a durable happiness for mankind." (Rectorial Address, " What is and for what purpose does one study universal history.")

2. Wieland and Heinse on Communism

The thinkers and poets of Germany, like the economic revival, owed a good deal to the stimulations of English and French thinkers and poets. After the middle of the eighteenth century the German philosophy of enlightenment, the drama, the novel, jurisprudence, and political and social criticism were influenced by Locke, Shaftesbury, Richardson, Fielding, Hume, Rousseau. Even the philosophy of Kant would have been impossible without Ockham, Locke, Berkeley and Hume. From these names it will be observed that during the last quarter of the eighteenth century the French influence declined whilst the English influence became stronger.

So long as the German middle class remained

weak, the French influence predominated, as the provincial princely courts imagined themselves to be small editions of Versailles; every prince imitated Louis XIV; whatever came from Paris appeared to him as a support of absolutism. The situation underwent a change after the middle of the eighteenth century: the German middle class began to bestir itself, and soon the literary fight against French Court drama and the French influence generally was in full swing. The middle-class character of English literature was discovered, and this literature received the preference. Of the French there remained only Rousseau, who was himself a good bourgeois, in spite of his social-critical digressions.

The poet and critic who accomplished this transformation in that mirror of the time, the drama, was G. E. Lessing.

The literary opposition to the petty princely despotism, to official arbitrariness and the fetters of the police, stimulated political thinking and aroused an interest in sociological problems, constitutional questions and social criticism. One of the best literary spokesmen of this tendency was Chr. M. Wieland (1773—1813), an amiable essayist, limpid and ingenious in his diction, earnest and enlightened in

his matter, and equipped with an astonishing knowledge of antiquity and of Western European modern times.

For us his works "Der Goldene Spiegel" ("The Golden Mirror," 1772) and the "Nachlass des Diogenes von Sinope" (Dialogues of Diogenes of Sinope") are particularly interesting. It goes without saying that Wieland, too, perceived the ideal to consist in "living according to nature." He also described a society free from any trace of coercion and living under perfect equality. He avers that the communist ideal can only be realized within a society that is numerically insignificant, inasmuch as complicated societies require a machinery of government with a wise prince at its head and benevolent laws. He puts the following story into the mouth of an old member of a communistic society: "Our little nation, which consisted of about five hundred families, lived under perfect equality, as we needed no other distinction than that made among men by Nature herself, who loves variety. Affection for our constitution and reverence towards the elders, whom we regarded as preservers of the same, are sufficient to maintain order and peace, which are the fruits of harmonious principles and inclinations among us.

" We all regarded ourselves as a little family, and the trifling discords which were wont to break out among us are to be likened to lovers' tiffs or a temporary estrangement between brothers and sisters. . . . From their eighth to their thirteenth years our children receive as much instruction as is necessary to enable them to be happy as members of our society. From their twelfth to their twentieth years all our lads are shepherds, all our maidens are shepherdesses. Agriculture occupies the men from their twentieth to their sixtieth years, gardening being left to the old men. Silk cultivation, the preparation of cotton and of silk, the tending of flowers and all household duties are assigned to our wives and daughters." As the population increases new colonies are established. The youths who manifest ambition, unrest, or thirst for fame, are afforded opportunities to see the world and find scope for the exercise of their capabilities abroad, as in the communist society these qualities disturb simple and temperate morals, equality and brotherliness.

Wieland's pupil was J. J. Wilhelm Heinse (1749—1803), who was filled with the spirit of the Renaissance and gifted with considerable

literary power. In his "Ardinghello" (1787), which consists of dialogues upon art and philosophy and is pervaded by the love of antiquity, the author depicts at the conclusion of his work a moderate communistic State. On one of the Greek islands a number of people established a State, and furnished it with a constitution upon the model of Lycurgus and Plato, in which, however, regard was paid to many of the objections of Aristotle. Machiavelli's "Prince" was also read, but "only to serve as a warning." "Plato's two-fold category of citizens, of which the one class has the posts of honour and the other is to carry on agriculture, we wisely avoided, although, despite Aristotle, we retained the community of goods. The heap of evils which we thereby banished was all too great; and it seems to us that in this respect the acute critic of all the Republics known to his age had not sufficiently cast off the prejudices of education. Meanwhile property continued to exist in the shape of public remuneration, and everything that a person brought was reserved to him until the end of his days. Further, according to the model presented by the lofty disciple of Socrates, women were held in common, although only to a certain extent, and likewise men; that is each

person had complete freedom of personality, and all violence was severely punished. For the preservation of good order it was ordained that men and women should live apart from each other." Ten per cent. of the women had votes as regards the conduct of general business, but in all matters appertaining to women the decision depended upon female votes. "Thus love lifted his pinions in supreme freedom; all people exerted themselves to be both beautiful and amiable. As far as the population was concerned, we endeavoured to follow the example of the Spartan, whom the astonished priestess of Delphi was uncertain whether to greet as a mortal or a god; the children belonged to the State. In short, we avoided all the inconveniences indicated by Aristotle, and to some extent also by Aristophanes in his 'Ecclesiazusoe.'" In Heinse's communistic State there were still slaves, and the youths were trained for war, just as in the ancient communistic Republics.

3. Heretical Social and Religious Tendencies: Weishaupt (The Illuminati)

Whereas Antiquity and the Renaissance

occupy a prominent place among the ideas of Wieland and Heinse, the social and political ideas of the Illuminati and of Lessing have a heretical religious cast. Although they indicate a revival of mediæval heresy, the primary question is no longer the manicheistic struggle between good and evil, but the progress of mankind to a higher stage, to spiritual perfection, the furtherance of the divine plan for the education of mankind, for redemption from political coercion and spiritual and economic oppression.

This was the secret teaching of the Illuminati; Lessing, on the other hand, openly expressed these ideas.

The Illuminati formed a secret order after the example of the Freemasons, with whom they had much in common. They called themselves in the first place Perfectibilists and were active between the years 1776—1784. Their founder was Adam Weishaupt (1748—1830), a Catholic professor of natural and canonical law at the University of Ingolstadt, once a pupil of the Jesuits and then their opponent, who adopted the organizing methods of the Jesuits in order to combat ecclesiasticism, despotism, ignorance and servitude, and to establish a kingdom of freedom and equality

for the whole human race. The membership was secret, and only scholars, poets, priests, teachers, high officials, princes and other influential and powerful personages could be admitted to the Order. The Order of the Illuminati was divided into three classes with several grades, which were designed to select the members and only to admit the most capable to the higher grades. The Order numbered among its members, for example, Herder, Goethe, the famous Berlin bookseller, Nicolai, the Dukes of Gotha, Weimar and Brunswick. The latter could only have belonged to the lower grades, which were concerned merely with enlightenment and education, and not with the objectives of the Order. One of the most effective propagandists of the Order in the years 1780—1783 was Freiherr von Knigge (1752—1796), the author of a popular book, "Umgang mit Menschen" ("Intercourse With Men"). I am inclined to think that Lessing had some contact with the Illuminati, or was familiar with their teachings; his friend, Nicolai, probably initiated him into the Order.

A typical picture of the sentiments of that time is portrayed by Knigge, when he relates that "the deceptions of the parsons have

turned almost everybody against the Christian religion, making them fanatics at the same time; the despotism of the princes has everywhere created the counteracting tendency of a movement towards freedom." These tendencies were utilized by Weishaupt in order to realize his plan of emancipation; and it is noteworthy that he adopted the pseudonym of Spartacus. As an organization of the masses of the people was then out of the question, only the intellectual leaders of the period were to be inspired with his ideas, in order to accomplish a peaceful revolution.

Weishaupt's system of thought was somewhat as follows: Nature finds herself in a process of development from the lowest to the highest; the various types, grades and forms which Nature exhibits are only metamorphoses of one and the same being. That which appears to be a fully worked-out type may be only the lowest stage of a new and higher metamorphosis. The driving-force of this process of development is human needs. New needs create new periods of development. "From every satisfied need a new need arises, and the history of the human race is the history of its successive needs. The history of the origin and development of needs is the history

of the process of perfecting which the human race has undergone, which is the object of the activities of civilization, the refinement of manners, the development of the latent intellectual forces. With every step in the evolution of the process an alteration is effected in the mode of living, the moral and political condition, the conception of happiness, the behaviour of men towards each other, their mutual relations, the whole situation of the contemporary world." The lowest stage of the human race was slavery, rough nature; the circle of needs was narrow, but " freedom and equality, the two most excellent goods of mankind, were enjoyed to the fullest extent." But it was part of the plan of God and Nature to educate mankind to a higher level of civilization. As families increased the means of subsistence began to lack, the nomadic life ceased, men settled down, tilled the soil, and established private property; the strong and clever achieved domination over the weaker members, as the latter were no longer able to satisfy their needs with their own strength and needed the help of the former; and when one is helpless he loses his freedom. Thus freedom and equality vanished, and with them security from insults and attacks. The need of security

caused men to establish States and to invest particular individuals with their whole power. This led to despotism, which, instead of granting security and freedom to all, oppressed all and filled them with fear. Separated into hostile States, men succumbed to nationalism and patriotism; to hate and to kill other men came to be regarded as virtues; even the citizens of the same State are made hostile to each other by local patriotism and egoism. The masses of the people cannot free themselves from this miserable state through their own strength; only a secret organization of the Illuminati, striving for the perfection of the human race, is capable of such a deed. It is a question of restoring mankind to its original freedom, not in the state of savagery and rudeness, but in a much higher social order. And this is also the meaning of religious history. The Garden of Eden is the symbol of the state of Nature characterized by freedom and equality; the fall from grace signifies the entrance of servitude and the foundation of states (coercive governments); the appearance and influence of Jesus of Nazareth was equivalent to the rehabilitation of the law of reason, of benevolence, of freedom and equality. For only through a revolution of the mind will

mankind attain its majority, and be moral, free and equal.[1]

In 1784 the Order of Illuminati was denounced to the Bavarian Government, which dissolved it and cruelly persecuted those of its members who were unable to escape. Weishaupt fled to Weimar, where he lived as a Court counsellor.[2]

4. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing

Lessing grew up in a religious atmosphere, and originally intended to devote himself to theology. Although he was diverted from this original aim by philosophical and literary studies and by contact with rationalists and deists, he often returned to serious religious and theological investigations, diligently reading the Church Fathers and most probably the

[1] Weishaupt, Address to the managing Illuminati, printed in the Nachtrag von Originalschriften, Munich, 1787.

[2] During the French Revolution the Reaction accused the Jacobins of deriving their doctrines from German sources, from the writings of Weishaupt. (Jaurès, Convention, 11, p. 1529 et seq.) In 1921 a Mrs. Webster published an anti-German book ("World Revolution," London), in which it was attempted to show that Weishaupt was the author of all social revolutionary movements in the interests of Germany, and that he desired to plunge England, France and Russia into confusion.

mediæval heretics. His Christianity assumed the practical character of social ethics. Typical of this attitude was his first incursion into the province of theology: his defence of the Moravians (1750), in which he exalts the sentiments and practice of early Christianity above worldly wisdom and scholastic quibbling. He there depicts a primitive Christian who enjoins us "to avoid, even to flee from, riches; to be pitiless towards ourselves and forbearing towards others; to esteem merit, even when it is loaded with insults and misfortune, and to defend it against the power of folly." Towards the end of his active life the heretical ideas of social Christianity occupied the centre of his intellectual outlook.

As mentioned above, G. E. Lessing must have had at least intellectual affinities with the Illuminati. His heretical religious social ideas are to be found in his "Discourses for Freemasons" and chiefly in the "Education of the Human Race." Both writings were composed in the first year of existence of the Order of Illuminati. The first work is characteristically dedicated to Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick, a member of the Order of Illuminati. "I, too," said Lessing in the dedication, "was at the source and drank therefrom." In the second

discourse we have the theory of the sinful condition of men in the State; States divide men; they create clefts and boundary walls, not only between peoples but also between men of the same State. It is, therefore, "very much to be desired that in every State there should be men who are emancipated from the prejudices of the populace and know exactly where patriotism ceases to be a virtue." Again: "It is not good deeds that are required, but the establishment of a condition where benevolence would be unnecessary," Lessing observes in the first discourse, which can only be interpreted to mean that a condition of freedom and equality should be established, for only under such conditions would everybody be provided for.

In the "Education of the Human Race," Lessing deals with the ideas of the development of mankind from savagery to perfection. World history is the systematic working-out of a divine process, in which mankind will become ripe for the Third Age.

The Third Age—this is the doctrine of Joachim of Floris and of the mediæval heretics; it is the doctrine of the "Eternal Gospel."[1]

Lessing, who must have paid considerable

[1] Cf. "Social Struggles in the Middle Ages."

attention to religious and mystical questions, was familiar with this doctrine:

86. It will assuredly come! the time of a new eternal Gospel, which is promised us in the New Testament itself!

87. Perhaps even some enthusiasts of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries had caught a glimpse of a beam of this new eternal Gospel and only erred in that they predicted its outburst as so near to their own time.

88. Perhaps their three ages of the world were not so empty a speculation after all, and assuredly they had no contemptible views when they taught that the new covenant must become as much antiquated as the old had been.

89. Only they believed that they could make their contemporaries, who had scarcely outgrown their childhood, without enlightenment, without preparation, men worthy of their Third Age.

90. And it was just this which made them enthusiasts. The enthusiast often casts his glances into the future, but for this future he cannot wait. He wishes this future accelerated, and accelerated through him. That for which nature takes thousands of years is to mature itself in the moment of his existence.

91. Go thine inscrutable way, Eternal

Providence! Only let me not despair in thee even if thy steps appear to me to be going back. It is not true that the shortest line is always straight.

92. Thou has thine eternal way so much to carry on together, so much to do, so many side steps to take! And what if it were as good as proved that the vast slow wheel which brings mankind nearer to this perfection is only put in motion by smaller swifter wheels, each of which contributes its own unit thereto.

And it takes time for all the small wheels of progress to be set in motion to start the driving power of the great wheel, in spite of all resistance.

5. Friedrich Christoph Oetinger

A theologian of comprehensive erudition in patristic, rabbinical and mystical literature, in philosophy and natural science, marked by inward piety and strong social sentiments, was the Swabian priest, F. Ch. Oetinger, who was born in Goppingen in 1702, and died a bishop in 1782. He studied in the cloister schools of Bebenhausen and Blaubeuren, then in the Tuebinger foundation, where he was subsequently tutor. His autobiography is an extra-

ordinarily instructive document for an understanding of religious life in the eighteenth century. Oetinger read Jacob Boehme, and was associated with the Moravians, through personal intercourse and correspondence. Of importance for our subject is Oetinger's work, "Gueldene Zeit" (1759-61), in which he deals with the Millennial Kingdom and develops the following social principles and doctrines:

"Three conditions are needful for true happiness in a realm. (1) That the subjects, despite all the variety that pertains to social order, despite all distinctions of classes, shall have an equality amongst each other, each finding his happiness in that of others, his joy in that of others, and thereby each is to be a free man beside the other. (2) That they shall have community of goods, not delighting in goods because they are property. By nature, each person has as much claim to use the goods of others as they have to use his goods. (3) That they shall demand nothing of each other by way of servitude. For if everything exists in abundance, there is no need for domination, property, or the obligations extorted and imposed by domination. Each would be anxious to enrich the other, if he

had some necessary things, without obligation. At the most, persons would exchange things with each other, and money would not be in use. Given these three conditions, right would be derived from the wise use of the forces of life. Each would have a right to that which wisdom helped him to find. But now that inequality of persons has arisen owing to the weakness of human dispositions; property owing to shortage of goods; obligations, agreements and contracts on account of the necessity to enter the service of and to labour for others, the original law of nature derived from the inner force of life has been overlaid by written law. Written law has invested persons with power, conferred the attribute of property upon things, and prescribed obligations for actions.

Just as these three conditions existed in Paradise, whilst their opposites arose after the Fall, so in the Golden Age equality will be so mixed with power, community of goods with the ownership thereof, and freedom from servitude with the obligation to labour, that at least equality, community of goods, and freedom from servitude and contracts will gain the upper hand in all."

These principles of Oetinger contain the

quintessence of the social doctrines of Christian theology.[1]

6. Fichte and his Social Policy

A countryman of Lessing, a vigorous national democrat, and one of the most distinctive and able German men of action and thinkers, was J. G. Fichte (1762—1814); as politician and orator he seems the ideal prototype of the later Republican agitators of 1848. Of his writings only the "Addresses to the German Nation" are of any general interest to-day, but these are well worth reading. All the others have been embodied in the history of German intellectual development. His formative years coincided with the time of ferment and dissatisfaction with the political and religious state of Germany, as we have described it above. It is scarcely surprising that at first he was cosmopolitan in his outlook and critical towards religion. Like Klopstock, he enthusiastically greeted the French Revolution, and regarded the war against the Revolution not as one between Germans and Frenchmen but as an attack of despots upon freedom. It was a matter of

[1] A summary of Oetinger's doctrines is given by Dr. C. A. Auberlen in "Theosophie Friedrich Christoph Oetingers," second edition, Basle, 1859.

indifference to him whether or not "the Lorrainers and Alsacians found their towns and villages in the geography books under the chapter devoted to Germany or France." 1793 marks the culminating point of his revolutionary fervour: he scorned the censor, defended the French Revolution, and grappled with the problem of an ideal State, or, to use his own terminology, the rational State. At that time he was really a Jacobin. It is true that later in life he also had his radical fits, when he would have been ready to drive out all the German princes in order to establish the unity of the German people, to whom he ascribed a high social and political mission. Especially in the years 1807 and 1813 was he the head and front of the resistance to all absolutist reactions, but on the whole, after 1794, Fichte became increasingly dominated by religious mysticism, political nationalism, and lower middle-class ideology. It should be borne in mind that Fichte as a personality was greater than his ideas, and that consequently these seem to be greater than they really were. This man had something of proletarian intrepidity about him, but he was repressed by the pettiness of the German conditions of that time.

In his "Addresses to the German Nation" he appeals to his countrymen: "Yea, in all nations there are still some souls who cannot even yet believe that the great promises of a realm of justice, reason and truth for the human race are vain and naught, and who, therefore, assume that the present age of iron is but the transition to a better state. These and with them the whole of mankind, are relying upon you. The old world, with its glory and its greatness, as well as with its defects, has fallen by its own unworthiness. If there is truth in what is expounded in these addresses, then are you of all modern peoples the one in whom the seed of human perfection most unmistakably lies, under all circumstances, in you. . . . Consequently there is no alternative: if you perish then there perishes together with you every hope of the whole human race for salvation from its miseries." Fichte uttered these words after the occupation of Germany by the French (1807—8). The German people could not save themselves and the world by means of the old political methods and forms: "the struggle with weapons is terminated; there emerges, if we will it, the new struggle of principles, of morals, of character." The German people will be born

again, and will effect the rebirth of the whole of civilization by means of their self-sacrificing labours to bring about the promised kingdom of reason and of truth. "The dawn of the new world is already past its breaking, gilding the mountain tops and the coming day." In spite of these admirable passages, which to-day —after the world war—might have been written by a revolutionary German Socialist, the "Addresses to the German Nation" are thoroughly national and aimed at elevating the national consciousness of the people in the tragic hour of German humiliation, strengthening it, purging it of every French element, and preparing it for the decisive campaign against foreign and native oppressors. As said, Fichte was a national democrat, a Republican —an ideal forty-eighter.

In social and economic matters he was a lower middle-class reformer. His ideas upon these questions are embodied in the "Self-Sufficient Commercial State," which he published in 1800, and in which he defined his attitude towards economic principles and practical measures of politics. Fichte's social and economic scheme was a self-sufficing community, regulated by the State, in which every able-bodied person, organized according to

occupation, should have a modest but assured income. It is a far cry from Plato's rational State to Fichte's "Self-Sufficient Commercial State."

Fichte is opposed to economic competition, to Free Trade, to the tendency towards world commerce; he perceives in these phenomena and tendencies the sources of deception, of over-reaching, of quarrelling, of national hatreds, and of wars. He desires an exclusive national community, independent of the foreigner—a closed, rounded-off, spacious territory with secure boundaries, in which everything necessary for the satisfaction of the simple needs of life could be created and exchanged. The soil belongs properly to God, the creator of the world; only the use of the soil belongs to those who cultivate it. It is only the use of the soil and of the other raw materials that confers the right to exclusive enjoyment on those who are engaged in production. This property in the usage of things originated—according to Fichte—through the reciprocal treaty of citizens who shared in the usage of things. Consequently it is not occupation, but the productive or otherwise useful manipulation of things that creates the right to ownership.

In theory this may seem socialistic, but in practice Fichte's doctrine of property is meaningless. It would not be difficult for the landed nobility to assert their right to the possession of land through usage. Fichte's doctrine of property would not prevent traffic in estates, as buyers and sellers would be able to contend that in these transactions nothing more was involved than a transfer of usage, of utilization of the land. In short, Fichte's doctrine of property does not contain any socialistic element; at the most it is a fiction of juridical socialism.

With respect to social organization, Fichte divides citizens into three economic categories. The first category comprises the persons engaged in agriculture; the second category comprises the handicraftsmen (Fichte calls them artificers); the third category the merchants. Each class may only pursue its own calling upon rules fixed by mutual agreement: the farmer may not engage in handicraft or in commerce, etc.—in short, everything is delimited and dovetailed on guild lines. The State has to see that the vocational demarcations are not infringed. The State also determines the number of persons who are to follow each calling, so that it only receives

the necessary complement of members, thus maintaining the equilibrium of classes.

The foundation of society is agriculture, which must produce sufficient food and raw material to cover the needs of all. The regulation of the number of non-producers depends upon the productivity of agriculture: if the farmer is able to produce a superfluity of food sufficing for several persons, more artisans, more merchants, teachers, officials, etc. can be allotted to these vocations.

Exchange of goods between the persons belonging to different callings is effected by the merchants, whose numbers are determined by the State in accordance with the quantity of agricultural and industrial products available for exchange.

But according to what standard of value are the products to be assigned to the merchants, and at what prices are the merchants to assign them to the consumers?

The measure of value is a specific quantity of cereals. If, for example, four pounds of flour constitute an adequate daily ration for one person, this quantity of flour is the measure of value of a day's work and product. The longer one can live on a product the greater the value it has. According to this standard

other foodstuffs would be estimated with reference to their intrinsic value. Meat, for example, as means of subsistence, has a higher intrinsic value than bread, because a smaller quantity of meat nourishes for as long a time as a larger quantity of bread. A quantity of meat which, on an average, nourishes a person for one day is worth as much corn as the person would require to nourish him for the same period, and he has, so far as we now see, this quantity of corn to pay therefor.

A new principle is introduced to enable the value of manufactures and of all labour which is not directly applied to the acquiring of foodstuffs, to be calculated. The worker must be able to live during the time, to which a period of apprenticeship, if needed, must be added and spread over his working life. He must, therefore, receive for his work as much corn as he would need if he only lived upon bread during this time. As, in addition to bread, he requires other foods, he must exchange therefor the corn which remains to him according to the measure above indicated. The product to be worked-up (Fichte means raw materials) is worth as much corn as would have been produced by an equivalent amount of energy expended upon cultivation of wheat.

Fichte writes very circumstantially and tediously. What he means is as follows: The measure of value is the nourishing properties of a specific quantity of cereals; foodstuffs are exchanged with each other in proportion to their nourishing properties. Industrial products are exchanged with each other according to the quantity of labour embodied in them, which, if applied to agriculture, would have produced so much corn. The wages of industrial labour must cover this toil as well as the outlay on raw materials.

In this way the farmers and the artisans would be able to receive the just value of their products.

What is the merchant's position? If he effects exchanges according to the given standard, he gives value for value. But how is he to live? The answer to this question is that the State will allow him to add a certain, officially-determined increment; this increment is the source of his income.

From this it logically follows—according to Fichte—that commodities are exchanged above their intrinsic value, i.e., that prices are constantly higher than values, which is manifestly an absurdity.

So far we have spoken of an exchange of

goods. It is clear that there must exist some universally valid medium of exchange, in order to facilitate exchange operations. This general medium of exchange is money. Although there is a place for money in Fichte's Commercial State, this money has no intrinsic value. Instead of silver and gold, there are value tokens (of paper or similar relatively cheap material). The quantity of money tokens is fixed by the State:

"The quantity of tokens which the State puts into circulation is, in accordance with the above, quite arbitrary. However large or small the quantity may be, it has always the same value. Suppose it pleases the State to fix it at a million thalers (or to divide it into a million parts, each of which it calls a thaler). How much meat, fruit, etc., or flax, hemp, linen or woollen cloth is equal to corn in value is already fixed by the calculation above described. If one traces back to corn the value of all commodities, other than corn, which are in public circulation, and adds thereto the quantity of corn which is really passing from hand to hand in commerce, he may then say: the value of such and such a measure of corn is in circulation. Let this measure be divided by the money in circulation.

If, for example, there are a million measures, under the above assumptions, one measure of corn in money would necessarily be one thaler, an equivalent quantity of meat, fruit, flax, linen, woollen cloth, according to the former calculation of the measure of corn, would be a thaler, etc." The prices ascertained in this way would be legally fixed.

Foreign trade is reserved solely to the State, as are other foreign relations (diplomacy, war, peace, etc.). It was Fichte's desire that the whole world should consist of similar exclusive, rounded-off, self-sufficing States. Then, as he thought, there would be no wars, no quarrels and jealousies. Organized on national lines, the different peoples would be impressed with firm national characters, and would develop their peculiarities. The exclusive States would exist side by side in perpetual peace. Science and Art would become international. "The treasures of foreign literature would be introduced through the medium of academicians and exchanged for those of home literature. . . . Nothing would prevent the scholars and artists of all countries from freely exchanging information. The newspapers would no longer contain accounts of wars and battles, peace treaties or alliances, for all these things

would have vanished from the world. They would only contain news of the progress of science, of new discoveries, the advancement of legislation, of policy, and each nation would hasten to adopt the invention of another." On this note of optimism Fichte ends his lower middle-class Utopia.

VII

THE FRANCE OF NAPOLEON AND THE RESTORATION

1. War, Imperial Policy, and Commercial Speculation

AFTER the execution of Babeuf and Darthé and the banishment of Buonarroti and his comrades, the French socialist revolutionary movement disappeared from the surface of politics for three decades. The Directory repressed all opposition and prepared the way for the rule of Napoleon. In 1799 he overthrew the Directory, and in 1804 he was invested with imperial dignities. The French enjoyed equality—equality before the despotism which, however, filled their imaginations with bloody wars and glorious victories and their pockets with the chinking and paper results of commerce, of war contracts and war industry. For traders, speculators, moneylenders and stock-brokers the years of the Revolution and of the Napoleonic Wars were very lucrative and exciting. The buying-up of the confiscated property of the Church and of

the *emigrés,* the rise in the prices of cereals, the capitalist monopolizing of native and overseas raw materials, especially in consequence of the blockade of French ports by the English fleet, made the rise of Napoleon to coincide with the rise of the French bourgeoisie.

Imperial policy supplanted all home and constitutional questions; the geographical conditions of imperialist successes, of economic prosperity and of military complications, and the significance of sea power, etc., were investigated with ardour. Even in Fichte's "Self-Sufficing Commercial State" we find noteworthy observations upon these subjects, tracing the antagonism between England and France to the insular position of the former.[1] Yet more remarkable are the observations of Charles Fourier, who, among other things, infers from Japan's insular position that this Empire is destined to play a great maritime and economic part, and detects in it a future competitor of Russia with regard to China.[2]

[1] "As islands are only an appendage of the Continent, France and England ought to belong to one another. Whence the national hatred of the two peoples for each other and the continuous attempts at invasion on one side or the other"—so Fichte declares.

[2] "Soon the invasion of China by Russia will force the Japanese to build a navy, and after it has become a protective wall against Russia, they will have the means to embark upon world industry." (Fourier, "Quatre Mouvements," 1808 p. 289.)

Fourier also describes the wild orgies of swindling speculations, the predatory price manipulations, the Stock Exchange manœuvres of the financial magnates and merchants during that period. False war news was the means for causing a rise or fall in the French securities.[1]

The French bourgeoisie enriched themselves and forgot the revolutionary struggles and constitutions as long as Napoleon's star shone undimmed, that is until about 1811.

2. Charles Fourier

The intellectual product in the social sphere of this extraordinarily agitated time (1792—1810) was Charles Fourier (1772—1837), a man who combined exuberant imagination, boundless optimism and senseless vanity with acute intelligence, a gift of penetrating observation, and great courage. His was a character of wholly unequal parts. Originally a merchant and shop assistant, during his sojourn in the industrial centre of Lyons he was prompted to social criticism by the sharp competition and the disintegration of the economic life, which caused the downfall of

[1] Op. cit. p. 347.

many small existences—including his own—while the co-operative projects then published by L'Ange (Lange) seemed to point to a way out from the chaos. This gives us the whole of Fourier at a glance. As a destructive critic he attacked competition and disintegration; as a constructive reformer he advocated associated labour by means of co-operative joint-stock undertakings. He expounded his ideas in his work, "Quatre Mouvements," which was, apparently, printed at Leipzig and was published in the year 1808. What he afterwards wrote was only by way of amplification and commentary.

His whole life's work is permeated by the following basic ideas. (1) Human motives and passions are on the whole good, and, given proper scope, would conduce to happiness: the social task consists in affording them this scope by means of appropriate social institutions. (2) Commerce is morally and materially pernicious, and corrupts human dispositions: it is the base soul of the civilization that is approaching its term and that will be replaced by the associated and co-operative mode of economy and life. (3) Marriage is general hypocrisy and involves the slavery of woman; it must be replaced by free love.

(4) Civilization; the present stage in the history of mankind is full of evils; nevertheless it creates the forces requisite to raise mankind to the stage of association and harmony, where human motives will find scope for their free play and will create wealth, amenities and peace.

Fourier makes the claim that he has at length penetrated into the secrets of divine creation and of nature. What Columbus, Copernicus and Newton accomplished for the perception of the material world, he (Fourier) accomplished for the perception of the laws of movement of the organic and social world. He regards his " discovery " as more important than " all the scientific labours since the emergence of the human race " (Introduction). " Shall we lament," he asks, " that the Platos and Senecas, the Rousseaus and Voltaires and the whole of the spokesmen of ancient and modern ignorance—so far as their works are concerned with politics and moral philosophy —will vanish into oblivion? " (p. 26). He asks the philosophers what their ideology is good for : " I, who am ignorant of the whole mechanism of thought, and have read neither Locke nor Condillac, have I not enough ideas to discover the whole system of general

movement, of which you have only discovered a quarter, that is, the material part? And this, moreover, after 2,500 years of scientific efforts. Me alone will present and future generations have to thank for inaugurating their immense happiness. As possessor of the book of definitions, I disperse the political and moral-philosophical fog, and on the ruins of precarious sciences I build the theory of universal harmony." (p. 268.) These new truths were prompted by his reflexion upon the agricultural association which was put forward by L'Ange in 1793. Starting from this idea, Fourier believed he had discovered the whole mathematical secret of human determinations. The redemption of mankind depends upon the transition to association, to co-operation. " And this transition will soon be accomplished. We shall be eye-witnesses of a spectacle which can never be repeated on this earth : the sudden transition from incoherence to social combination : it is the most dazzling effect of movement that can be executed on earth; the anticipation of it must compensate the present generation for all its calamities. Every year through which the metamorphosis extends will be worth centuries." (p. 30-1.)

But enough of quotations. They fully

confirm our description of Fourier as a man of unequal parts. Let us pass to his doctrines.

Fourier's conception of nature is that of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. All phenomena present themselves to him as mathematically executed movements. These movements—he says—are four in number: social, animal, organic and material. Newton discovered the law of material movement. It is the law of gravitation. Now the law of social movement has to be discovered. In social life individual passions conceal the law of movement. These passions are directed to definite ends, which are the "destinées sociales" (social objectives). If our passions are given their proper scope we need not hesitate to follow them, for in giving effect to them, in the "passional attraction," as Fourier is always asserting, we shall find our goal and the full satisfaction of our highest desires. Consequently the teaching of moralists and philosophers about the necessity of repressing our impulses and passions is extremely pernicious; these teachings have never availed anything; they remain ineffective, and their only result is the accumulation of libraries of books which are nothing but waste paper. The moralists were followed by the economists,

who advocated commerce and, therefore, only gave an impetus to swindling, forestalling, bankruptcies and Stock Exchange manipulations, causing total demoralization and much misfortune.

There are three centres of attraction around which human passions gravitate.

(1) Sensual (or the five senses). (2) Intellectual passions (friendship, reverence, love, family feeling). (3) Refined passions (emulation, love of change or novelty, organization).

Thus the first group has five passions, the second group has four, the third has three—making twelve in all. These are like twelve needles, which drive the soul towards the three crucibles or goals of attraction. The most important is group 3, for these aim at general and social unity, but only provided they express themselves, not individually but in group organizations, in associations, and there find full scope. (pp. 113 et seq.)

From the mixture of the twelve passions arise the most diverse characters. A combination of twelve passions yields about eight hundred different characters, so that all perfection would be potential in an assembly of eight hundred men; and if these men were properly educated from childhood they would

manifest the greatest talents : men like Homer, Cæsar, Newton, etc. " If, for example, the population of France, numbering thirty-six millions, be divided by eight hundred, we should find among them 45,000 individuals capable of equalling a Homer, a Demosthenes, a Molière, etc." (pp. 116-17.)

All this, however, is based upon the assumption that these passions and talents are developed under a co-operative mode of life and according to Fourier's ideas.

And this new order of mankind is coming. The stage of association follows the stage of civilization, which is now visibly approaching its end.

Mankind has so far passed through the following stages.—(1) State of Nature : The age of Paradise in the Garden of Eden, or Edenism, where there was freedom and equality and an abundance of fruits, fish and wild animals. In every relationship of life men lived in common and were organized in groups. (2) Savagery : Owing to the increase of the human race and the absence of deliberately rational unions, there arises a shortage of food, which provokes quarrels, attacks and plunderings. (3) Patriarchate : The strong and brutal set up families, degrade woman,

and introduce exclusive property, as may be observed among all peoples who have lived or still live under the patriarchal order; in Biblical times among the Jews, and also in China and other parts of Asia. (4) Barbarism: that is the Middle Ages, where feudalism developed, the only good point of which was that many women were honoured. For the rest, feudalism developed the germs of civilization, commerce and industry. (5) Civilization: the utter incoherence and atomization of men, who regard each other as enemies and behave accordingly. Entire absence of organization; all the higher sensibilities destroyed by the commercial spirit—humanity, fatherland, justice, mutuality disappeared; forestallers; market fluctuations; crises; cheating; hypocrisy; enrichment of the rich; impoverishment of the poor; contempt for non-possessors; competition; disintegration; economic anarchy; disappearance of family feeling; the son struggling against the father; oppression of labour by capital; domination of government by the wealthy; rebellions and revolutions of the despairing—such are the characteristics of civilization. Woman in particular suffers thereunder; she is bought and sold, for marriage is nothing

more than the purchase of girls, who from youth upwards are trained to look for a purchaser; but the sexual instinct will not be suppressed; the "honest" women have their house friends, the men their mistresses; cuckoldry and prostitution are the inevitable accompaniments of monogamic hypocrisy. Nevertheless, civilization has achieved some good: it has promoted science and technology, revealed the possibilities of raising the productivity of labour, and given the rich *entrepreneurs* the opportunity of conducting agriculture and manufacture upon more rational business lines.

It prepared the way for a commercial and industrial feudalism. A small number of the rich manage the economic forces of the country, or the State establishes comprehensive agricultural undertakings, where a certain degree of organization and co-ordination finds a place, and the workers are guaranteed an existence. Accordingly, civilization is followed by the sixth stage, which Fourier calls Guaranteeism—a sort of social and political epoch to serve as a transition to the seventh stage: to Socialism—Fourier calls this Sociantism—which will inaugurate complete harmony and happiness. Men will then dwell

in phalansteries: in large hotels run on co-operative lines, and will work co-operatively in groups of 1,600 to 1,800 (twice 800 and something over, in order to ensure the best mixture of characters, where the three "refined passions"—emulation, variety and concentration of forces—will have full scope).

The socialization of the means of production was outside the range of Fourier's ideas. The phalansteries were to be free associations of capitalists, workers and talented officials, and the product of labour was to be divided in the following manner: Labour to receive five-twelfths, Capital four-twelfths, and Talent three-twelfths.

Free love, education of the children at the cost of the group, seven meals daily, opera and drama, joy of life—all this would be made possible by the phalanstery system, so that men might hope to attain an average age of 144 years and a height of seven feet. (Quatre Mouvements, p. 251.)

Fourier was politically indifferent, hated the Revolution and the Jews, revered Napoleon, and was always seeking a great, rich, good man, who would take up his projects. His writings are only partly readable. The best exposition of Fourierism is given by Victor

Considérant in his book " Destinée Sociale," which appeared in 1837, the year of Fourier's death, and is dedicated to the King, Louis Philippe, the ruler and greatest proprietor of France. But this book contains more than Fourierism: it is a very important conspectus of the social critical work that was performed in France up till Marx's arrival in Paris (1843). I quote the two following passages from this book. " We are accustomed," said Abel Transon, a disciple of Fourier and Saint-Simon, " to regard England as a model. But what does science tell us? It tells us that her giant industry is based on the principle that land and capital are concentrating into fewer and fewer hands. And what does experience teach us? It avers that the result of all this miracle is the oppression of the lower classes, the establishment of an industrial feudalism, which is more hateful and shameless than the feudalism of the Middle Ages." (" Destinée Sociale," p. 223.) The other quotation runs: " Political economy is in course of killing the liberal spirit through the policy of interests, which brands the liberal spirit as foppery and foolishness, just as the spirit of Chivalry was killed by Liberalism, and ridiculed by it as Don Quixotism." Those acquainted with Marx's

"Heilige Familie" will note the French influence.

3. Saint-Simon

It is necessary to distinguish between Saint-Simon and the Saint-Simonians as strictly as between Kant and the Neo-Kantians. Saint-Simon was as little a Socialist as Kant; both rather belonged to the Liberal school of thought; Kant was a philosophic Liberal, Saint-Simon an economic Liberal; both regarded religion as the doctrine of practical ethics.

It was only the younger generation of Saint-Simon's disciples, who were familiar with the associative theory of Fourier, the English labour struggles and social doctrines (1810—1826) and with Buonarroti's socialist ideas, who, after 1829, commenced—four years after the death of their master—to impart a social-reformist tendency to the ideas bequeathed to them, just as the Neo-Kantians, who are acquainted with modern socialism, endeavour to establish the closest connection between their master and Marxism.

Count Henri de Saint-Simon was a scion of a family belonging to the higher nobility of France; he was related to the famous writer

of memoirs, the Duc de Saint-Simon (under Louis XIV) and traced his pedigree back to Charles the Great. He was educated according to his class, for Court and military circles. As a young officer he fought by the side of Lafayette in the American War of Independence against England, and there learned to admire the purely middle-class nature of the United States. He had already drawn up plans for the construction of the Panama Canal, as he was keenly interested in all problems relating to commercial and industrial activity. On returning to France, he took no part in the Revolution, but utilized the economic opportunities to buy and sell confiscated properties, thus acquiring much money (140,000 francs), which enabled him to fill up the gaps in his knowledge and indulge in all the enjoyments which life could offer him. The money was soon dissipated by the aristocratic-intellectual mode of living, and then he lived sparingly and often in great need, until the Jewish banker, Rodrigues, and his friends afforded him the means of passing the evening of his days free from care. In the years 1802—1825 he developed a lively journalistic activity. His ideas were born of middle class industrial interests and his personal

humanitarian inclinations. A glance at the conditions of that time shows this distinctly.

The middle class, which had grown rich during the Revolution and the wars following in its wake, acquiesced in the Napoleonic despotism so long as victory crowned it with a halo of glory. After the catastrophes of Moscow and Leipzig (1812 and 1813), the middle class went into opposition, and when Napoleon returned from Elba to Paris he was confronted with a strong constitutional movement, to which he was obliged to make concessions.

After his final defeat (1815), the Bourbons (Louis XVIII, 1814—1824, and Charles X, 1824—1830) returned to power. They ignored all the lessons of the Revolution, and restored the nobles and clergy to their old position, whereupon the middle class became rebellious. Economically it was much stronger than its predecessor of 1789, as technology and industry had made considerable progress in the meantime. While their representatives more than ever felt that they wielded the real power in the State, the Bourbons deprived them of all political influence. A rebellious bourgeoisie always seeks the assistance of the lower classes and regards itself as the repre-

sentative of the people against personal monarchy and reaction.

The intellectual product of these conditions was Saint-Simon (1760—1825) and even more the Saint-Simonians, for the latter came into prominence on the eve of the July Revolution, when middle-class circles found themselves in sharp opposition to the Bourbons, whereas Saint-Simon was only an eye-witness of the beginnings of this rebellion and laboured for a reconciliation between the monarchy and the bourgeoisie.

The essence of Saint-Simon's doctrines consists in the proposition that the chief task of society should be to promote the production of wealth, that consequently the industrialists (the manufacturers, technicians, farmers, artisans, bankers, merchants) form a more important factor in society than the nobility and the clergy, and that middle-class talent should undertake the administration of the country. " It is not the political constitution, but the right of property that has the greater influence upon the well-being of society. The claim to property should be based on the growth of wealth and the freedom of industry. The law that establishes property is the most important of all; this it is that serves as basis

of the social structure. The law that defines the division of powers and regulates their exercise (i.e., the Constitution) is only a secondary law. (Saint-Simon, "Œuvres," edited by Rodrigues, Paris, 1841, first part, pp. 248, 257, 259, 267.) Saint-Simon sometimes distinguishes between the right and the law of property. The former he regards as progressive: "as the human intellect progresses, the law of property, as once established, may not be perpetuated." (p. 265.) He further contends that the property of the nobility is based on conquest, on force, whereas that of the industrialists (manufacturers, farmers, bankers, merchants, artisans) is the result of their legitimate activity. His conception of property is a defence of middle class and a condemnation of aristocratic property and of the political pretensions of courtiers, and highly-placed State and ecclesiastical dignitaries. A popular summary of these ideas is contained in the parable which Saint-Simon published in 1819, for which he was prosecuted but declared to be not guilty by the jury. In this parable he compares the eventual loss of the fifty first physicists, chemists, technicians, industrialists, shippers, merchants and artisans with that of fifty

princes, courtiers, ministers and higher clergy. The loss of the former would be irreplaceable, whilst the fifty vacant places of the latter would be easy to fill. Saint-Simon therefore advised the Bourbon King Louis XVIII to ally himself with the industrialists and become a citizen king. The French bourgeoisie also sighed for a citizen king, who was granted them in 1830—after the fall of the Bourbons —in the person of King Louis Philippe (1830—1848).

Saint-Simon also made some incursions into philosophical history, and attempted to exhibit the past in the light of his conceptions. We shall deal with them in connection with Saint-Simonism in the following chapter. Meanwhile it is to be emphasized that Saint-Simon's economic ideas were purely middle-class in their character, and at first his attitude to the workers was also a middle-class attitude. In his first work, "Lettres d'un habitant de Genève" (1802), he divided society into three classes: (1) into liberals (scholars, artists, as well as all persons having progressive ideas); (2) into possessors, who desire no innovations; (3) into those persons who rally round the word "equality." To the workers who strive for equality he declared: "The possessors

have acquired their power over the non-possessors, not by virtue of their property but in consequence of their intellectual superiority." ("Œuvres," second part, pp. 24, 27, 40.) "Look at what happened in France," he says to the workers, "when your comrades ruled there: they brought about starvation." (p. 40.) Saint-Simon was thinking of the period of the Convention (1792-94); he did not know that it was not the workers at all who ruled then; he was also unaware that the starvation was the work of the opponents of the Jacobins: the jobbers, the forestallers, the profiteers. Saint-Simon regarded the rule of the Convention as "the most complete anarchy." (p. 136.) "The Convention destroyed Louis XVI, the noble philanthropist, and the monarchy, the fundamental institution of the social organization of France. The Convention created a democratic constitution, which gave the greatest influence to the poorest and most ignorant." (p. 136.)

It is true that Saint-Simon remained a Liberal, and, therefore, a supporter of the rule of the industrialists, but as an enlightened man he was also a careful observer of the movements among the workers. He noted how the English industrial workers had been revolting

against the industrialists since 1810, destroying machines (Luddite movement), and embarking on a struggle for the franchise and factory protection (1816—1818). Moreover, he was himself in want, and possessed a strong moral and religious disposition, which prompted him to pay attention to the social doctrines of Christianity; he knew Lessing's "Education of the Human Race," and was influenced by its ideas. After 1819 Saint-Simon emphasizes more and more the necessity of assisting the workers. In the "Catechisme des Industriels" he exhorts the employers to look after the workers: "The captains of industry are the born protectors, the natural leaders of the working class. So long as the captains of industry refrain from uniting with the workers, the latter will be seduced by intriguers and radicals into making a revolution and seizing the political power." ("Œuvres," first part, p. 221.) The events in England serve as illustrations. In the last years of his life his interest in the well-being of the workers outweighed all other interests; his views upon this subject were expounded in a work published immediately before his death, "Le nouveau christianisme" (1825); the new Christianity shall so regulate the relations

between Capital and Labour that "the most rapid improvement possible of the lot of the poorest classes will be effected;" the new Christianity sheds the Catholic and Protestant dogmas and rituals and becomes social ethics, whose chief postulate is that men should behave to each other as brothers. "The new Christianity will consist of parts which in the main coincide with those that are peculiar to the various heretical sects of Europe and America. Like primitive Christianity in former days, the new Christianity will be supported and promoted by the force of morals and public opinion." Saint-Simon then states that at first he addressed his teaching to the rich, in order to win their support for these doctrines, at the same time making it clear to them that his doctrines "were not opposed to their interests, because apparently an improvement in the position of the poor is only possible through means which cause a decrease in the pleasures of life of the wealthy classes. I have to make the artists, the scholars, and the great employers understand that their interests are essentially identical with those of the masses of the people, that they, on the one hand, belong to the working class, and, on the other hand, are its natural leaders, and that the applause

of the people for the services rendered it is the only worthy recompense for their glorious influence." He even appealed to the Holy Alliance and the rest of the kings and princes: "Unite in the name of Christianity and perform the duties which it imposes upon the mighty; know that it commands them to dedicate all their strength to the most rapid elevation possible of the social fortunes of the poor."

After the announcement of this "new" gospel Saint-Simon died. Summarizing, it may be said: Saint-Simon was neither a Socialist nor a Democrat, but a Liberal with a strong ethical bias, who was able to give consistent expression to his Liberal and ethical theories only because of his intellectuality and his aloofness from the pursuit of money. This applies particularly to his doctrine of property, which—in view of the rise of the working class and the beginning of the proletarian class struggle—could bear an interpretation unfavourable to middle-class property. And this interpretation of the doctrines of their master was effected by the Saint-Simonians.

4. The Saint-Simonians

The small number of supporters who

adhered to Saint-Simon's doctrines belonged almost exclusively to the cultivated and prosperous section of the population. After 1827 the elections to the Chamber more and more favoured the opposition, but ever since 1821 the intellectual youth of Paris had formed secret associations to overthrow the Bourbons, to establish the sovereignty of the nation, and "to emancipate the people." They entered into relations with the Italian Carbonari, learned their conspiratorial methods, studied the French Revolution and English social conditions and theories, and were receptive to all kinds of new ideas, as understood by revolutionary youth who were obliged to organize in secret. Among these young people were Saint-Amand Bazard (1791—1832), a logical, clear-thinking mind, and P. B. J. Buchez (1796—1865), who was later to devote himself to propaganda in favour of co-operative production (with State aid). Bazard became a Saint-Simonian in 1825; he read Buonarroti in 1829, and in the following year he lectured on the doctrines of the master at Saint-Simonian meetings. His collaborator was B. P. Enfantin (1796—1864), manager of financial institutions and later a railway director, a man who combined high imagina-

tion and enthusiasm with great energy and acuteness. With them were active the brothers Pereire, who were later the founders of great financial institutions, and then Ferdinand Lesseps, the subsequent constructor of the Suez Canal and director of the preliminary work of the Panama Canal. It may be seen how the real essence of Saint-Simon's doctrines: industrial-commercial Liberalism, eventually worked out; meanwhile, however, the social aspect occupied the foreground and the Saint-Simonians were regarded as Socialists. The collected works of Saint-Simon and Enfantin (Œuvres de Saint-Simon et d'Enfantin) contain the brilliant "Exposition de la doctrine Saint-Simonienne" (Exposition of the Saint-Simonian teaching), which Bazard gave in his lectures (1829—1830). He took certain of the ideas of Saint-Simon, developed them with the aid of the results of his own studies and experiences, and blended them into a homogeneous system. The basic features of this system are as follows:

Saint-Simon taught that in the history of mankind organic and critical periods alternate. The first is characterized by unity of thought and belief, a certain community of social

interests; such periods were: Greece, up till the fifth century B.C., where polytheism held undisputed sway; further in the Middle Ages up till the appearance of Luther, where the Catholic Church formed the spiritual unity. The organic periods are followed by the critical, where the unity of thought disintegrates and social dissonances appear; as in Greece after the fifth century B.C., where a variety of philosophical systems arose. In the Middle Ages the critical period commenced with the Reformation, which was accompanied by various systems of thought and revolutions, to be followed by an organic period. To inaugurate this period is the mission of Saint-Simon, who expounded it in the "New Christianity." It will close the critical period ushered in by Luther.

Following out this train of thought, Bazard declares that the alternating organic and critical periods are characterized by the principle of association and that of antagonism respectively. The antagonisms or conflicts, however, are of a temporary and secondary nature, whilst the chief endeavour of mankind and the chief law of history is association. The antagonisms and struggles between families and towns were fought out with the

object of welding the nation together under the empire of one faith, of a spiritual unity. Mankind is now striving to achieve the great, universal, organic union in which love, knowledge and wealth will increase.

The antagonisms and conflicts are always caused by the domination of physical force, which leads to the exploitation of man by man. But the effect of this force is always weakening; and this weakening process is revealed in the progress which has transformed the slave into the worker of to-day. The graduated stages are : slavery, servitude, wage-labour. Here is distinctly shown the decrease in the exploitation of man by man.

While the person of the slave belonged to his master, the serf was possessed of some liberties, and the modern worker is politically free; what the latter still lacks is freedom from economic dependence. This progress is also manifested in the growth of association, but this growth is still hindered by clinging to the traditional law of property, which enables the proprietor to live without working and to rule other men. At least it is said " that property is the basis of the entire political order. We Saint-Simonians are generally of this opinion, but property is a social fact which is subject

to the law of progress. Property may therefore be understood, defined and regulated at various times in various ways." (Vol. 41, p. 231.) Heinrich Heine, who, in the thirties of the last century, kept the German public informed about this movement in his Paris correspondence to the "Augsburg Allgemeine Zeitung," observed ironically: "The Saint-Simonians do not want to abolish property, but to define it out of existence."

However, the Saint-Simonians advocated the abolition of the right of inheritance. "The property of deceased persons should fall to the State, which will have become an association of active workers. The whole nation should inherit and not the family concerned. The privileges of birth, which, moreover, have suffered so many relaxations, should be completely abolished." (p. 243.) Why should anybody attain to wealth merely because he is the son of his father or the relative of another person? The sole right to property is the capacity to produce it. In the associated State, in the association of active workers, everybody will occupy a position according to his capabilities, and will be paid according to his deeds. The State will be transformed into an economic administration, at the head of which

will be the best administrative talent available; just as to-day we have military academies to educate capable army officers, so in the associated State there will be schools and academies for industrial leaders. The task of these leaders will consist in managing the national household, classifying the workers according to their capabilities, allocating them to the most suitable positions, and rewarding them according to their services. The economic process will be regulated, not by a democracy but by a hierarchically-organized management. Only in this way will it be possible to abolish idleness, overwork, poverty, exploitation of man by man, and the vestiges of slavery, and to establish the new organic period, the epoch of social harmony.

The modern worker, who has become politically free, must also be made industrially free. But this need not be effected by forcible revolution. "The teaching of Saint-Simon aims at no overthrow, at no revolution; it aims at a transformation, at evolution—it brings the world a new education, an ultimate rebirth." (p. 279.) Hitherto great changes have been marked by a forcible and catastrophic character, because men were not acquainted with the laws of progress. It was

ignorance which turned evolution into revolution. Now mankind is conscious that it is progressing, and already it perceives the law of social crises; consequently it is easy to prepare the transformation and avoid being surprised by force. "The changes in the social organization which we announce—the notion that the present system of property will have to yield place to quite different property institutions—will be effected neither suddenly nor forcibly, but by means of a peaceable and gradual transition." (p. 281.) In the Saint-Simonian associated State the highest social stage will be occupied by religion (by the preachers of the New Christianity); the second stage by the natural scientists; the third by the industrialists. Moral and religious enthusiasm, clear-sighted, disciplined reason, and efficient industrial technique will redeem mankind. (Vol. 42, p. 388 et seq.)

These lectures of Bazard aroused much interest, and were eminently fitted to attract intellectuals, artists, and benevolent Liberals.

However, division soon broke out among the Saint-Simonians, which rendered impossible any further successful propaganda. Enfantin, in violent antagonism to Bazard and Rodrigues, came under the influence of the

Fourierist ideas concerning the emancipation of women, and attempted to graft the principle of free love on to Saint-Simonism. To this most of the members objected. Enfantin withdrew with a number of his followers to Menilmontant, where he lived for some time as a social father with his community. Saint-Simonism as a movement became impossible, but it bequeathed to the social-revolutionary movement of 1830—1848 a wealth of sociological and economic ideas which continued to operate for a long time.

VIII

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE ENGLISH LABOUR MOVEMENT (1792—1824)

1. The Influence of the French Revolution

IN the middle of this period of economic, political and social-critical ferment, which suffered a further convulsion through the outbreak of the French Revolution, the first democratic and socio-political Labour movement arose in Great Britain. Its founder was the Scottish shoemaker, Thomas Hardy (1752—1832), who settled in London in 1772, where he absorbed the democratic ideas that were in the air. Towards the end of 1791 he founded a society of the working classes, which he called "The London Correspondence Society" (L.C.S.), and entered into communication with the French Jacobins. Similar organizations sprang up in Sheffield, Coventry, Leeds, Nottingham, Norwich and Edinburgh. They kept in touch with each other by means

of letters, which explains the name "Correspondence Society." Political societies were then forbidden to form themselves into a federation; consequently intercourse was maintained through the exchange of letters between individual members. The principles of this society were democracy and labour protection legislation. A manifesto of the L.C.S., published in April, 1792, stated:

"Freedom is the birthright of mankind; we hold it to be our duty to cherish it inviolate for the benefit of our fellow-citizens and our children. It is the citizen's right to share in the government; without this right no man can call himself free.

"The people of Great Britain are for the most part unrepresented in Parliament and excluded from any share in the government. The consequences of the restricted, unequal, and, therefore, inadequate franchise, as also of the corrupt elections, are: oppressive taxation, unjust laws, restriction of freedom, and waste of the national finances. The sole remedy for these evils is the equal, universal and just representation of the people in Parliament. The L.C.S. is resolved to work energetically for this object, but it condemns all force and anarchy, its weapons being solely

reasonable persuasion, determination and unity."

At the end of September, 1792, after France had declared herself a Republic, the L.C.S. sent the following congratulations to the Convention sitting at Paris:

"Frenchmen! You are free already, and we are arming ourselves for the victory of freedom in Great Britain. While you are enjoying the enviable glory of being the pioneers of freedom, we are looking forward to the blessings in store for mankind. If, as is our ardent wish, you gain the ultimate victory, then a triple alliance not of crowns, but of the peoples of America, France and Britain will bring freedom to the nations of Europe and peace to the whole world."

Important democratic politicians attached themselves to the L.S.C. Spence worked enthusiastically on its behalf; and Godwin's "Political Justice" was read by the members of the Labour society immediately it was published. The membership grew so considerably that the Government, which had been at war with France since 1793, arrested the leaders of the L.C.S. and prosecuted them for high treason. The accused were mostly acquitted, but the organization suffered from the

continual persecutions until it went out of existence about the year 1799. Most of the Labour leaders who came to the front in the years 1810—1820 had received their education in the L.C.S.

2. The Luddites

The most varied elements were absorbed in the formative process of the modern proletariat: wage workers, home workers, expropriated peasants, artisans and factory workers, whose destinies were affected in different ways by the effects of the economic revolution. Many of these sections looked back longingly upon the period of the guilds; others were revolutionary, and strove for democracy, social reform, agrarian-communistic reorganization; the attitude of the majority was marked by intense hatred of the employers and the whole factory system. The British working class was the first to be plunged into the economic processes and mode of living imposed by the capitalist system, to the unravelling of which the best minds of the nineteenth century were devoted. In the first decades of the industrial revolution there reigned chaos, out of which towered the new machines like monstrous alien beings, attracting

the attention of the astonished beholders.

Surrounded by the wonders of science and technique, by all kinds of machines, as daily phenomena and articles of use, which were brought into existence by the nineteenth century, the man of the twentieth century can hardly imagine the sentiments which the emergence of the age of machinery inspired in its first victims. Even up till about the middle of the nineteenth century there were cultivated Englishmen who regarded machines as diseased offsprings of the human intellect and as a symptom of the decadence of England. They were fond of quoting Bacon's dictum that the art of war flourishes in the youth of a State; learning in the manhood of a State, and then both together for a long time; but that the technical arts, trade and commerce, flourish during a State's decay. And the central organ of the Chartists wrote:

"Scarcely anyone ventures at the present time to deal with the question of machinery, which seems to inspire a certain fear; everyone sees how it effects the greatest of all revolutions, by entirely changing the relation of classes to each other, but no one dares to intervene."

What artisans and factory workers had been

fearing since the sixteenth century overtook them in the last half of the eighteenth century: an invasion of iron demons who quickly supplanted the time-honoured, paralyzed the most skilful human hands, and scattered riches and poverty. With fear and astonishment the race of proletarians, sinking into the depths of poverty, gazed on the restless, octopus-like beings, seemingly endowed with immortal powers, and the word was silently passed from mouth to mouth: Let us unite and destroy them, while they are yet few in number and are still in the age of childhood. If we allow them to increase and multiply undisturbed, they will become absolute masters and we their slaves.

The first law against the destruction of machinery was passed in England in 1769. It regarded such acts as crimes punishable by death. The beginning of the industrial revolution had, therefore, effected a transformation in political ideas concerning the value of machinery. Despite this Draconian punishment, the numbers of machine destroyers in the Midlands and the North of England continued to grow. In Nottingham a certain Ned Ludham, or Ned Lud, was reputed to have destroyed a stocking frame. His action found

imitators in Lancashire, and the machine destroyers gradually became known as Luddites.

In the years 1811 and 1812 Luddism became a mass movement, which pursued political as well as economic ends. The ruling classes were alarmed by the Luddite outbreaks to such an extent that the Government introduced a bill which prescribed the death penalty for the destruction of machines. At the second reading in the House of Lords, in February, 1812, Lord Byron was present, and he delivered an impassioned speech upon the bill, in which he defended the workers.

The bill became law in March, 1812, but it proved as ineffective as the Act of 1769, although it was enforced with Draconian severity. On several occasions persons were killed in the attacks on machines and factories, but it proved extraordinarily difficult to discover the culprits. It was not until large sums of money were put on the heads of the Luddite leaders that treachery disclosed their identity. Sentences of death upon Luddites were passed only by the York Assizes. On the 13th January, 1813, three workers, including the Luddite leader, George Mellor, ascended the scaffold there. They preserved

a courageous attitude until the last; Mellor even delivered a short speech from the scaffold to the crowd. In its report upon the execution, the "Annual Register" (1813) observed that Mellor and his fellow sufferers did not look like murderers, and under other circumstances would have been honest men. Three days later they were followed by fifteen workers; seven were executed in the forenoon, and eight in the afternoon. The shocking sentences and the executions at first disorganized the Luddite movement, but it gradually recovered, and in the year 1816, the Luddite movement, which was at bottom an elemental revolutionary movement, was again in full swing. Byron regarded it in this light, and on the 16th December, 1816, he wrote a song of the Luddites, comparing them with the men of the American War of Independence.

3. Storm and Stress

The Napoleonic Wars came to an end in 1815. External peace, which England had not known for decades, returned to the land, but the bonfires which greeted it cast grim sidelights upon scenes of privation, poverty, revolt, conspiracies and demonstrations. For the hope of an improvement in the situation

was not realized. Low money wages, high food prices, unemployment and crushing taxation, political and economic servitude (landlord rule and anti-combination laws) raised popular discontent to the highest pitch. Since 1816 England had been in a state of rebellion, which, kindled by police provocation, led to useless conspiracies, involving great sacrifices, in the provinces as well as in London. In 1816 Luddism revived; in Nottingham the stocking knitters destroyed thirty machines; in the Eastern counties of England the agricultural labourers set fire to the ricks; smashed the threshing machines, and demonstrated with banners bearing the inscription "Bread or Blood." In Birmingham, Preston and Newcastle masses of the unemployed demonstrated; in Dundee and Glasgow there were bloody collisions with the military. In the Midlands an attempted rebellion, which was secretly organized, cost twenty-three of those who took part in it either their lives or their freedom. 1819 was the year of the gigantic demonstration in Manchester for manhood suffrage and social reform, at which the military fired on the crowd, killing and wounding several hundred persons. In 1820 preparations were made in London for a revolt,

which ended in the execution of five of the participants. During these four years of elemental revolutionary movements Shelley wrote his workers' Marseillaise:

TO THE MEN OF ENGLAND

Men of England, wherefore plough
For the lords who lay you low?
Wherefore weave with toil and care
The rich robes your tyrants wear?

Wherefore feed, and clothe, and save,
From the cradle to the grave,
Those ungrateful drones who would
Drain your sweat—nay, drink your blood?

Wherefore, Bees of England, forge
Many a weapon, chain, and scourge
That these stingless drones may spoil
The forced produce of your toil?

Have ye leisure, comfort, calm,
Shelter, food, love's gentle balm?
Or what is it ye buy so dear
With your pain and with your fear?

The seed ye sow another reaps;
The wealth ye find another keeps;
The robes ye weave, another wears;
The arms ye forge, another bears.

Sow seed—but let no tyrant reap;
Find wealth—let no impostor heap;
Weave robes—let not the idle wear;
Forge arms—in your defence to bear.

4. Robert Owen

With Owen the history of modern socialism in England begins. He is also one of the greatest figures in the history of socialism generally. He was the first social reformer who, earlier than all the middle-class economists and statesmen, grasped the significance of the economic revolution, and as a socialist sought for means to place its achievements in the service of social progress. Superior in personal character to Fourier and Saint-Simon, he also penetrated closer to the heart of capitalism than these thinkers; but he was far surpassed by them in historical knowledge and the capacity to take a general survey.

Robert Owen was born in 1771, in Newtown (Wales), of a lower middle-class family. His father was successively a saddler, iron dealer, and post-master. Until 1781 he attended the village school, where he distinguished himself by his aptitude. He then became apprentice

and assistant in Stamford, London and Manchester. At an early age he manifested a remarkable talent for organization, especially the gift of leading men. His strong and simple intellect, perfect bodily health and even temper, always under the control of reason, resulted in an unbroken, energetic and stright-aiming volition, in a self-confidence and rapidity of resolution which destined him for the leadership of men. Owen was one of those rare natures whose mental processes are carried on without great friction and disturbing eddies, and, therefore, communicate clear and decisive commands to the motor nerves without loss of time. From men organized in this fashion are drawn great generals, eminent statesmen, and also successful revolutionaries, when their actions are guided by proper sociological ideas. In the year 1790, Owen became manager of a textile factory in Manchester, which employed five hundred workers. The young man of modest address soon won a guiding influence over the workers placed under his control, although the factory workers were then recruited from the lowest and most demoralized sections of the people. His salary amounted to £300 per annum, and he had the

prospect of becoming a partner in a very profitable undertaking. Yet he only remained in this position until 1795, when he started in business for himself. The creative floods of the industrial revolution carried to wealth and respectability those business men who knew how to take advantage of the opportunity, and hurled into the abyss those who could not adapt themselves to it. Owen saw, grasped, and conquered: he decided without delay to manufacture on his own account, and devoted himself to fine spinning, which yielded the largest profits. His business grew rapidly, and as early as the year 1797 he and a number of partners acquired a textile factory for £60,000 from the firm of Dale and Arkwright, in New Lanark, where he commenced his pioneer social reform activity, which, in conjunction with his business success, made him one of the most famous men of his time. In the year 1800 he took over the entire management, and at the same time effected the social rebirth of the factory village of New Lanark, where he not only produced fine yarn, but also nurtured, healthy and happy people and noble characters.

The principal reforms which Owen introduced in New Lanark, and which were

attended by the anticipated success, were the following: (1) He established infants' schools and based instruction upon observation; he abolished rewards and punishments; boys received instruction in gymnastics, girls in domestic subjects. (2) Children under ten were not allowed to work in the factory. He fixed a normal working day of ten and a half hours. (3) The factory rooms were built on spacious and hygienic lines; he also made efforts to introduce sanitation in the factory village and to educate the local population in habits of cleanliness, order and punctuality. Owing to the establishment of a co-operative shop, where good commodities were sold at low prices, as well as to the physical and intellectual health resulting from the hygienic houses and workplaces, the public houses lost their attractions. The workers were moderate in their enjoyment of alcohol, and drunkenness and its demoralizing effects disappeared. (4) Sick and superannuation funds were established; in the year 1806, when a business crisis broke out and much unemployment prevailed, Owen paid the unemployed their wages until the crisis was over.

Owen's whole plan of reform was based on the idea that vice could only be abolished when

its source was stopped up. The conditions in which men lived must be so shaped as to develop all the good there is in mankind.

For the character of man depends wholly upon the environment in which he is born and lives and works. It is, therefore, a question of so shaping the surrounding conditions—the character-forming factors—that man would become virtuous, and feel and work as a social being.

From 1812 onwards Owen laboured for educational reform and factory legislation, addressing public meetings; he also became a Freethinker and in 1817 a Socialist. In place of the poor law, he advocated the establishment of agricultural and industrial colonies for the unemployed, and eventually advised the workers to organize themselves in productive co-operative societies, and to divert to their own use, and transform into a blessing for all, the technical inventions which operate as a curse against them under the rule of Capital. The causes of the deterioration in the position of the workers and the growth of unemployment and dependence, he perceived to lie in the unexampled increase of machinery, which creates more and more wealth for the rich, but brings only unemployment and reductions

in wages to the propertyless, driving their wives and children into the factories. In the years 1818—1821, he propagated the following opinions in newspaper articles, pamphlets and reports to the Government:

Before the industrial revolution had profoundly affected English economic life, that is until about 1790, productive work was executed by adult men; the premature harnessing of children and women to systematic industrial wage-labour was a rare occurrence. It may be assumed that about the year 1792 approximately a quarter of the population was engaged in production. The population of Great Britain and Ireland might then have been numbered at about 15,000,000, and, therefore, those engaged in production numbered about 3,750,000 persons. The scientific (mechanical and chemical) productive power of the same period probably amounted to three times the power of hand labour: to 11,250,000, counting the entire productive power as 15,000,000. The number of productive powers and that of the population were consequently equal. Productive power and population stood in the ratio of 1 : 1.

Then there came the rapid application of mechanical inventions, which had been

invading productive labour since 1760, and conquering one sphere after another. The transformation which they brought about is extraordinary. They filled the factory with child and female labour, and led to a prolongation of the working day. The increase in the number of productive powers is enormous. In the year 1817 the population of the British Isles amounted to 18,000,000, of which a third, that is 6,000,000, was trained to productive labour. Meanwhile the increase in the mechanical productive powers had been incomparably greater, and they now (1817) amounted at a conservative estimate to 200,000,000. Restless, systematic, and almost costless, these 200,000,000 of iron workers are engaged in the creation of wealth. For every Briton more than ten strong labour powers were now producing goods of all kinds day and night; and every human worker had to struggle for his existence against more than thirty mechanical competitors having no wants to satisfy. Thirty versus one! In the years between 1792 and 1817 the following changes were effected in the economic conditions of the British Isles—

The population increased from 15,000,000 to	18,000,000
Manual labour increased from a quarter of 15,000,000 to a third of 18,000,000	6,000,000
The mechanical productive units increased to	200,000,000
The old mechanical productive units amounted to	11,250,000
The entire productive units in the year 1817 therefore amounted to	217,250,000

Thus in the year 1817 there were more than twelve productive units for every member of the British population. Since 1792 Britain's power to create wealth had multiplied twelvefold. Britain may either waste this superfluity of wealth in wars and in other useless undertakings or expend it upon the improvement of the condition of the population. And it was this wealth that enabled the British Government to carry on expensive wars for almost a generation, and to overthrow Napoleon.

The enormous growth in Britain's productive forces is, however, insignificant compared with the opportunities of which advantage may still be taken. The country still contains

unused or improperly used capital, which would be sufficient year by year to develop productive forces which would far surpass the equivalent energy of manual labour. Even with a population of less than twenty millions, and with the assistance of productive forces which are only guided by blind self-interest, Britain is able more than to satisfy her own market, and, in addition, to congest the world market with factory commodities of all kinds. The British Government is, therefore, anxious to open up new markets, even in the most remote countries; and if it could summon a new world into existence, British industry would not be in the least embarrassed to satisfy the new demand.

And yet the needy cry in vain for succour; whole classes of society are sinking into poverty; the value of manual labour (wages) is falling; the poor are filled with hate and resort to force; and the benevolent wring their hands over the dire conditions without being able to remedy them. In fact they cannot be remedied with the methods hitherto employed; rather is it certain that they will extend and intensify. For it is the progress of science, the increase in mechanical productive forces, and the growth of wealth that create these conditions, and must continue to create them

under the prevailing conditions. What, then, is the cause of mass poverty and the general state of privation? The cause consists in the rapid growth of the new productive forces, for the advantageous application of which society has made no provision; society has failed to set up institutions which would give all its members an opportunity to share in the advantages of the new scientific and economic achievements.

The great problem of our time, therefore, lurks not in the sphere of production, but in that of distribution. Swiftly flowing and teeming streams of wealth for the proper utilization of which no arrangements have been made; rich stores of knowledge which remain unused—these are the real causes of the evil. Whence arise poverty, ignorance, idleness, crime, Draconian punishments and bloody wars—the symptoms of a state of society which is morally and materially unhealthy. Neither the political economists and statesmen, nor the spiritual teachers and lawgivers, have shown themselves able to understand this state of affairs and apply thereto a drastic remedy.

Owen was, therefore, a socialist.[1] As, in

[1] The expression "Socialist" occurred for the first time in the "Co-operative Magazine" for 1827.

view of the backwardness of the labouring masses, he did not believe in their class struggle and emancipation, and as his free-thought ideas taught him that help would not come from struggle, but only from enlightenment and the peaceful alteration of conditions, he lapsed into Utopianism, and looked for assistance solely from the foundation of communistic colonies. In 1820 he retired from business life, and founded communistic colonies partly in America, partly in England, all of which came to grief. He withdrew from the proper Labour movement which had merged into a class struggle since 1822 (since the repeal of the anti-Combination Laws). It took over from Owen his criticisms of society and the co-operative principle, and at a later date established co-operative societies.

5. Combe, Gray, Thompson, Morgan, Bray

Abram Combe (1785—1827) was completely under Owen's influence. In the year 1827 he visited New Lanark, like thousands of other persons, and immediately came under the spell of the Owenite train of ideas. Three years later he published an interesting pamphlet: "Metaphorical Sketches of the Old and the New System," and in 1825 he founded the

communistic colony of Orbiston, near Glasgow, where he died of over-exertion. After his death his communistic creation fell to pieces.

John Gray (1798—1850), an acquaintance of Combe's and one of the shareholders in the Orbiston communistic colony, was a consistent advocate of reform in the medium of exchange and circulation. He attended the Repton Grammar School, and was then apprenticed to a merchant in London, where he was stimulated to ideas of a socially critical nature by the years of privation between 1816 and 1820. In the year 1825 he published a pamphlet: "Lecture on Human Happiness," which was conceived almost entirely in the spirit of Owen's ideas, and contained a statistical table, in which it was mathematically demonstrated that the productive class only receives a fifth of the product yielded by its efforts, whilst four-fifths go into the pockets of the unproductive class. Competition has not only ceased to produce any benefits, but exerts a directly injurious effect. Gray praised Owen's plan, but added the following announcement at the end of his pamphlet: "In a further Lecture we shall endeavour to explain another set of arrangements on the basis of a national capital, by the introduction

of which the only limits to our wealth would be the exhaustion of our productive powers, and the satisfaction of our wants."

The promised treatise is the book published in the year 1831, entitled "The Social System," which concentrates the whole of social reform within the process of exchange. The salient features of his plan of reform are:

The precious metal standard should be completely abolished. Money as a medium of exchange ought to be as accessible and easily attainable as the goods for which it serves as a medium of exchange; and as a measure of value gold ought to be as constant as a yard or a pound. Gold is neither easily attainable nor constant in value, and is, therefore, unsuitable as a medium of exchange and measure of value. And what applies to the gold standard also applies to bank-notes, as they also are representatives of value; they are issued upon securities, which, in the aggregate, contain more value than the money advanced upon them. Consequently we suffer constantly from a deficiency in the medium of exchange, as the latter falls short of the amount of goods waiting for exchange. In order to be able to fulfil this purpose, money itself should have no exchange value, but merely represent a

receipt, an evidence that its bearer has contributed a certain value to the national stock of wealth, and is entitled at any time to receive equivalent goods from the national stock of wealth. Exchange should not be carried out under anarchic and competitive conditions, but should be systematically organized. The whole principle of co-operation of which Gray speaks in his first work should be restricted to exchange. In this consists the most important distinction between him and Owen. According to Gray, the production of goods should retain the character of private enterprise. Only when the goods are in a finished state should they be exchanged by means of central co-operative institutions. For this purpose a National Bank should be established, possessing the sole power of manufacturing paper money (receipts). Further, national warehouses are to be built, to be placed under the control of agents in close touch with the National Bank, from which they would receive paper money, and to which they would report concerning the ebb and flow of goods. The various producers would deliver their goods to the national warehouses, accredited valuers would estimate the cost price of these goods (raw materials, depreciation and labour

expended), and would add a certain percentage of profit, fixed by the Chamber of Commerce, to cover the various expenses of rent, interest, depreciation of stock, incidents and taxes. The cost price plus the increment would represent the retail prices of goods. The producers would then receive paper money (receipts) for the amount of the goods delivered, which would enable them to obtain goods which they required from other warehouses. In this way the circulating paper money would always be in exact proportion to the existing stock of goods; the producers would always be able to exchange their goods for those of equivalent value which they required, and they would be able to maintain supervision over supply and demand. The books of the National Bank would show the balance of existing goods at any time, and over-production and crises would be avoided. In this process production plays the chief part; the more a person produces, the more prospect he has of being able to satisfy his manifold needs. Production will determine demand, and not, as to-day, demand the extent of production.

In contrast to Gray, who began his career as an unconscious exponent of Owenism and ended as a supporter of private production,

it was as a champion of utilitarian doctrines and an opponent of Owen that William Thompson (circa 1785—1833) commenced his investigation of social problems, quickly developing into a consistent communist and a theoretical exponent of Owenism. The first fruits of his investigation was his comprehensive work, " Inquiry into the Principles of the Distribution of Wealth most Conducive to Human Happiness." It bears distinct traces of his vacillations and of his painful efforts to satisfy his scientific conscience. Only his small work, " Labour Rewarded," which was composed towards the end of 1825 and published two years later, is consistently Owenite.

As a follower of Bentham, he was convinced that happiness is the aim of society, that the production of goods forms the fundamental condition of happiness, and that security of possession constitutes an incentive to the production of goods. Without the production of goods satisfaction of the needs and desires of men is inconceivable, and without security in the possession of the products of labour any increase and encouragement of production is out of the question.

Now the industrial revolution has shown that production by itself cannot produce

happiness. Happiness is dependent not only upon production but also upon the most equitable possible distribution of economic goods, which, however, is lacking to-day. Although the worker creates wealth, the capitalist retains the greatest portion of it, which gives rise to great inequality and insecurity, thus violating the principle of happiness. The whole state of society is bad and unjust. The production of wealth cannot increase where security of possession and of enjoyment is wanting. If, therefore, security and equality are the sole means of assuring the continued production of wealth and the greatest sum of happiness, no other kind of distribution remains than the lofty simplicity of justice: each person should be secured in the free disposal of the whole of the products of his labour. Moreover, this is the demand that the workers put forward. The industrious whose time was expended and whose physical and intellectual energies were exerted to create those objects in order to multiply their own amenities now come forward and claim as their property what their labour has made. But ought the workers to receive all, and the capitalist, who has placed the means of production at his disposal, to receive nothing? Thompson answers: Doubtless, the

labourer must pay for the use of these, when he is so unfortunate as not himself to possess them; the question is how much of the products of labour ought to be deducted for their use.

Two measures of value of this use present themselves: the measure of the labourer and the measure of the capitalist. The measure of the labourer consists in the contribution of such sums as would replace the waste of the capital consumed in the production, with such added compensation to the owner and superintendent of it as would support him in equal comfort with the more actively employed productive labourer. The measure of the capitalist, on the contrary, would be the additional value produced by the same quantity of labour in consequence of the use of machinery and other capital, the whole of such surplus value to be appropriated by the capitalist for the superior skill and intelligence in accumulating and advancing to the labourers his capital or the use of it. The difference of the amount paid by the labourer for the use of the capital necessary to enable him to exert his productive powers, according to these two measures, is enormous. It is the difference between almost perfect equality and excess both of wealth and poverty.

The Christian Owenite, John Minter Morgan (1782—1854), deserves a brief reference. In the year 1826 he published the "Revolt of the Bees," and in the year 1834 "Hampden in the Nineteenth Century," which preached Owenism in the form of dialogues and were much read by the educated workers on account of their beautiful and poetical language.

The best and most conclusive exposition of Owenism, however, was furnished by J. F. Bray, a Leeds compositor, in his brilliantly written book, "Labour's Wrongs," 1839.

6. Individualistic Social Reformers: Ravenstone, Hodgskin

We have now to consider a school of social criticism from the standpoint of individualism, which ran on parallel lines to the socialistic criticism. Although strongly anti-capitalist, these critics were unable to reach the socialist conclusion.

They perceived in capitalism and in the industrial revolution which had elevated it to the position of exploiter of the diligence of the workers a diseased and disordered condition of social life. The remedy prescribed by these critics is a social reform aiming at the establishment of a society of independent agricultural

and industrial workers, and rendering impossible the capitalist expropriation of the results of the industry of labour. Consequently, they are opponents of rent, of capitalist profits, of monopoly, of duties and high taxes, and of all constructive tasks and measures of the State generally. In outlook they are either Free Trade Liberals or anarchists, and are opposed both to the tactics and objects of the socialists, with whom they share only the critical attitude towards society. Their starting points are Locke, Adam Smith and Ricardo, and to some extent Godwin; all alike are of opinion that definite laws dwell in man or Nature, which would lead to human happiness, if the laws of the State, or artificial regulations, were not interposed to impede the free operation of natural laws.

The intellectual chief of this school is Piercy Ravenstone; his disciple is Thomas Hodgskin. Similar trains of thought may be found in the period between 1820 and 1830 amongst other writers, who were mostly anonymous contributors to various advanced periodicals. One of these anonymous publicists was discovered by Marx and referred to as " Pamphletist." Piercy Ravenstone's principal work is " A Few Doubts as to the Correctness

of some Opinions Generally Entertained on the Subject of Political Economy," which appeared in 1821. Three years later he published a pamphlet upon the funding system, which was discussed by Marx ("Theorien ueber Mehrwert," vol. 3). He is an acute and erudite investigator. He regards political economy as synonymous with the science of social life. The object of this science ought to be the establishment of human happiness, and not the accumulation of individual wealth at the cost of the working class. The essentials of his doctrines may be summarized in the following words:

The fundamental forces of society are the production of men and of goods. It is a law of nature that mankind tends to multiply, and Nature furnishes men with the capacity to gain their livelihood by labour. The increase of population causes an increase of production, of material and intellectual resources, which on their part lead to changes in the structure of society. Given the undisturbed operation of these fundamental forces, increase of population would always signify increase of wealth and the realization of happiness—the proper object of society. For only the increase in population renders possible a widespread

division of labour, which on its part enables men to organize the production of wealth on advantageous lines, and to provide inventors and scientists with incentive, experience and leisure to work out their ideas. Inventions are not exclusively the work of those persons after whom they are named, but are the product of the collective labours of the nation or of mankind. The fundamental forces of mankind are, however, impeded by certain social institutions, and the consequences of these impediments are the irregularities in social life which find expression in the poverty and oppression of the productive classes. What are the institutions that have produced these monstrous growths? Property (capital), high rents and high taxes. They destroyed the natural right of the labourer to the wealth he produces and continually augment the numbers of the unproductive classes, which receive an ever greater share in the produce of the labourer.

Capital as such does not exist; it is only preserved labour. Yet it has been made a fetish, a metaphysical concept, to which all the achievements of social life are attributed, whereas labour, which creates the real capital, is only regarded as a beggar kept alive by the

favour of the metaphysical being. The preserved labour, which is taken from its creators, is transformed into power in the hands of the unproductive classes. Its appropriators were originally only chiefs and officials chosen by the people; men seem to be too weak to be able to live without chiefs, and in course of time these chiefs usurped the country's sources of life and attained to political power. Economic and political power always go hand in hand. The manner in which property is distributed determines the form of government, the morals, and the character of a nation. Once in possession of political power, the rulers began to oppress labour with increasing intensity. The antagonism between Capital and Labour became an unbridgeable gulf.

All struggles on the part of the worker are ineffectual. They are a struggle between weakness and strength, between the bridled horse and the booted rider. The whole nation suffers and strains under this convulsive contest. The working class alone is powerless. It should be assisted by all who have the welfare of the State at heart. Only by a revolution can the nation free itself from the oppression of capital.

Similar trains of thought run through an anonymous pamphlet which appeared in the year 1820 in the form of an anonymous letter to Lord John Russell. The arguments in the pamphlet may be summarized as follows:

Since the rise of the age of machinery, labour has become extraordinarily productive. Capital, or preserved labour, can be abundantly produced. Yet the productive labourers are obliged to yield to the capitalists six-sevenths of the results of their toil for permission to use the means of production and raw materials. Interest on capital is, therefore, very high. And the higher the interest on capital, the smaller is the share of the worker in his own product, and the poorer is the productive class. The high interest on capital is a proof that there is little enough capital in existence, despite the fact that it can be so easily created. What are the causes of these contradictory phenomena? The causes are: the exchange of useful native goods for foreign articles of luxury by means of foreign trade; paper money; wars; corn laws; legal restrictions on industry. These causes prevent the rapid growth of capital and, therefore, a fall in the rate of interest, or, what comes to the same thing, they prevent any increase in the share

of the labourer in the results of his industry. Manifestly the remedy consists in the removal of these causes; chiefly, however, in the establishment of industrial freedom. Once this is introduced, the remaining causes may be easily removed. Capital will be rapidly increased, the rate of interest will fall, and the labourers will receive a larger share in their products. The improvement in the economic position of the workers will lead to a shortening of the working day. And a short working day and high wages are the surest signs of the prosperity of a country.

Sooner or later the time must come when capital will exist in such quantities that nobody will pay any interest for its use. When the rate of interest falls to zero, the hour of the emancipation of mankind will strike.

Impelled into the path of social criticism by circumstances and the bent of his mind, Thomas Hodgskin (1787—1869) was permanently and decisively influenced by Piercy Ravenstone. His chief works are: "Labour Defended," which appeared anonymously in 1825; "Popular Political Economy," consisting of lectures which he delivered in 1826 at the London Mechanics' Institution; finally, "Natural and Artificial Rights of Property

Contrasted," which appeared anonymously in 1832. His historical theory is not uniform, but the following summary may do it justice.

Society is a natural phenomenon endowed with definite laws. The world spirit, the supreme moral power, imposed these laws upon society so as to create a just world order. The task of the political economist is a purely negative one: it consists only in investigating these laws and preventing their infraction. Natural laws are beneficial, human laws are harmful. Originally there was equality. Labour counted as the sole title to possession and wealth. Through the operation of natural instincts mankind increased; with the increase in the number of men, material needs multiplied, which stimulated intensive thought and led to the enrichment of science and capacity through observation, invention and discovery. Inventions are not the work of individuals, but represent the result of the thought and activity of the whole of society; the inventors and discoverers only possess the happy gift of being able to blend all the various new knowledge into a unity by virtue of one little idea of their own. Moreover, geographical conditions exercise a strong influence upon the development of the capabilities and powers

of many peoples. If the natural course of things had not been interrupted by human institutions, the progress of mankind on the road of justice would have been general. But force interposed and violated the laws of nature: it sundered labour from wealth, enabling the non-worker to become a legislator. The consequences were: inequality, oppression, poverty, luxury, over-work, idleness, wars, crimes. But human laws have not been able quite to supplant natural laws. In spite of human laws, the liberation of the oppressed is being slowly accomplished through the operation of innate social laws. The serf slips off the fetters of servitude, and acquires the right to the products he creates. Then the capitalist appears, who levies a tribute of interest on the landlord. In our time the middle class is becoming ever more numerous; it represents a reincarnation of the union of labour and possession. With the spread of mechanical inventions, which will gradually abolish the heavy work, the middle class will make the whole of society free and equal men.

Hodgskin's political economy consists in the demonstration that capital is unproductive, that fixed capital (means of production) is created by the workers and endowed by them

with creative force, and that the circulating capital (wages in the form of means of life) is daily produced by the workers.

Three things are necessary for the production of goods: (1) Knowledge and an inventive mind; (2) technical capacity; (3) skill and strength in handling the tools. With the aid of these things, created by manual and brain workers, England has become wealthy; not through so-called capital, which is only a mystic sign. If the *entrepreneurs* take part in the process of production, they deserve proper remuneration as qualified workers. But as capitalists they represent only exploiters, whose interests are diametrically opposed to those of the workers. From this source arise the comprehensive struggles between Capital and Labour. Fortunately, the workers are now being aroused, and are organizing, and are also making efforts to supplement their numerical and physical preponderance by education and culture. And there will be no peace and no happiness on earth until labour and wealth are united in the same hands.[1]

[1] Cf. Marx, "Theorien ueber Mehrwert," Vol. 3; what Hodgskin calls fixed and circulating capital, Marx calls constant and variable capital.

IX

ENGLAND'S FIRST SOCIAL-REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT (1825—1855)

1st Stage: Alliance Between Working and Middle Classes for the Franchise (1825—1832)

ABOUT the year 1825 the British working class entered upon its first social-revolutionary movement, in the course of which it passed through three phases or stages of development.

The first phase was the struggle for the franchise, which it conducted in conjunction with the middle class. The economic revolution which had transformed the social life of Great Britain between the years 1760—1825, creating great centres of industry, especially in the North of England and Scotland, had aroused among the middle and working classes the determination to put an end to their exclusion from the franchise, and with this object they plunged into the struggle for

electoral reform. The democratic ideas which had arisen during the first English Revolution against absolute monarchy (1642—1649), as well as during the first years of the French Revolution (1789—1793), gained in strength during the third decade of the nineteenth century and the franchise movement was carried along on a flood tide. On the face of things, an alliance existed between the middle and working classes for the attainment of manhood suffrage, but in reality the economic antagonisms between the two classes were too marked to permit of an honest co-operation on the part of the middle class. The advanced section of the working class had already absorbed the social-critical doctrines of Owen, the Owenites, Gray, Hodgskin, and the other anti-capitalist writers; it regarded wage-labour as the sole productive, surplus-value creating labour, but it did not yet feel strong enough to play an independent part in the political struggle. Consequently it joined the middle class: the industrialists, manufacturers and merchants, the majority of whom were then without the vote. The struggle became particularly violent after the outbreak of the July Revolution in Paris (1830), when the Tories and their landlord government were

compelled to introduce reform proposals. In the year 1832 a new reform law was passed by Parliament which satisfied the middle class, but completely disappointed the working class, which was sent empty away. The workers remained politically unenfranchised after as before 1832.

2ND STAGE: ANTI-PARLIAMENTARISM AND SYNDICALISM (1832—1835)

The disappointment engendered by the new franchise and the common campaign with the middle class soon created an anti-parliamentary and syndicalist tendency among the working classes, which was pregnant with important developments. The whole parliamentary political struggle was regarded as a deception, as a diversion of the working class from its proper aims. Henceforth the slogan was: economic action. Trade unions of great numerical strength came into existence, which aimed at effecting the transfer of the means of production to the working class, partly by the general strike, partly by co-operative associations. After 1833 the entire British proletariat was drawn into this movement. All the ideas discussed at the beginning of the twentieth century relating to Syndicalism, workers'

councils, the transformation of Parliament into a chamber of industrial representatives, are to be found in the English Labour Press during the years 1833 and 1834. Comprehensive class struggles, mass strikes and demonstrations, congresses and conferences took place with the object of liberating the proletariat from the yoke of capitalism. This remarkable movement, the most intellectually interesting of all movements in the long history of the British working class, soon encountered the most violent enmity of the middle class, of the authorities, and of the Government, whose combined measures of repression succeeded in destroying the movement. A contributory cause of this defeat was the antagonism between the Owenites and social reformers, characterized by class solidarity, and the revolutionary syndicalists, marked by their readiness for class warfare, who fought out their differences of opinion within this great movement. The last document of this movement deserves to be quoted. It appeared on the 30th September, 1834, in the " Pioneer and Official Gazette," the central organ of the trade unions, and extracts therefrom read as follows :

" Thoughts on the growing spirit of union

among the labour holders or operative classes.—The spirit of union among the operatives of the industrious classes in the most advanced nations of Europe is the manifestation of a strong natural feeling, the remote causes of which are of greater magnitude and of more serious influence on the happiness of mankind than most people are disposed to acknowledge. From time immemorial this creation moves on, and works on, with us and within us. Man individual is at different times more or less actuated by the temporary arrangements of localities, or by the artificial circumstances that surround him; but nature acting incessantly upon man species by the constant laws of assimilation which develop all organized substances, they consequently vary from themselves imperceptibly at each instant of time, and no substance can rationally be said to BE, since all are passing from one modification to another modification. The condition of society at any given moment must always be considered as modifying itself. . . . It is the creator's law of progress working on for the greater happiness of mankind through the mind and the difficulties of individuals. A new system of labour is coming into the world. The new system and the struggles

between the classes are positive signs of new social arrangements. Boards of labour or committees of industry must assume the place now occupied by the great masters. Such arrangements will gradually pave the way to community of property.

"Meanwhile the struggle goes on and the operatives are suffering. But we must have patience. The spirit of the age is an irresistible power—unions will continue; more strikes and more blunders will succeed each other. However productive they may be of temporary mischief and misery, better associations shall be formed, and from the difficulties of the time the nation will learn. A new world will gradually unfold itself; the financial delusions and blunders which clog and shackle society will become evident to every one; a new kind of knowledge and liberty will arise and spread itself, from that single reason that no remedy can be found in the old, worn-out basis of thought and action far too narrow for the mental fecundity and for the mechanical powers of the age now begun!"

3rd Stage: Chartism (1836—1855)

Towards the end of the year 1836 there was

a revival in the Labour Movement. It had recovered from the defeats of the years 1834 and 1835. Henceforth it became a political class party, aiming at the democratization of the franchise and of Parliament, as a means for the establishment of a socialistic order. The movement had learnt from experience: the years between 1825 and 1832 had demonstrated the futility of the alliance with the middle class; the years 1832—1835 had shown the impossibility of a rapid victory through economic action alone.

Henceforth it strove for democracy, in order to be able to pursue its political and trade union objects as an independent Labour party.

Its programme was the Charter drawn up in 1837 and 1838, which was nothing less than a bill with the following six points: (1) Manhood suffrage; (2) Equal voting districts; (3) Abolition of the qualification for Parliamentary candidates; (4) Annual Parliaments; (5) Secret ballot; (6) Payment of Members of Parliament. From this Charter the whole movement was called Chartism. It was social-democratic in the best sense of the word, as it combined democratic and socialistic objects.

After 1837 Chartism became a mass move-

ment, a revolutionary contest for political power, and its members made great sacrifices. But right to the end it suffered from the following weaknesses: the impossibility of providing the masses with a strong and uniform organization, as the reactionary combination laws did not permit of the formation of a national organization with local branches. The Chartists could only form local associations, and could not maintain contact with each other. This sometimes led to secret associations, which only gave the Government spies an opportunity to encourage the existing insurrectionist tendencies and to bring the Chartists to trial for high treason, which involved great sacrifices. As a rule the leaders and the orators were the links between the local organizations. Consequently a pre-eminent part in the movement devolved upon them. But the leaders and orators were only men, and not exempt from human weaknesses. Disunion among them signified splits and disintegration in the Chartist associations, the formation of cliques and hero-worship, all of which rendered massive and well-organized action on the part of the Chartists very difficult. The other weakness consisted in the absence of uniform tactics.

There were two tactical tendencies in the movement, which struggled with each other for mastery: the one called itself the Physical Force Party, the other was the Moral Force Party. The former advocated the secret organization of an armed insurrection, whilst the latter put its faith in education and slow political and trade union organization. Owing to the struggles between the divergent sections, the movement was unable to take any united action, or to register any direct success. The struggles of the Chartists were frequently heroic, especially in the years 1839 and 1842. In the latter year matters came to a comprehensive mass strike, which was very close to a general strike.

The movement also suffered from a lack of well-informed leaders. Its most eminent leader was Feargus O'Connor (1798—1855), who was merely a democrat and land reformer. He was at the same time the owner and editor of the "Northern Star," the central organ of the Chartists (1838—1852); his powerful eloquence won for him an enormous influence over the masses, but he was not a figure of intellectual eminence. Eventually he became a Radical land reformer.

After 1848 the Chartist movement collapsed,

apparently having accomplished nothing. But in reality this entire period bequeathed a rich heritage of ideas, reforms and proletarian achievements.

The years of the social-democratic pioneer labours were a period of intensive preliminary reform activity—a time of the rejuvenation of England, of the first steps towards the democratization of the British Empire. The Chartist period saw the first real factory law for children and young persons (1833), the first mining law for children and women (1842), the ten-hour day (1847), the liberation of the Press (1836), the amelioration of the criminal law (1837), the abolition of the Corn Laws (1846), the repeal of the law prohibiting political associations (1846)—measures which tended to undermine partly the landlord oligarchy and partly the absolute domination of capital. Ever since then the franchise was a question of practical politics until it became completely democratic in 1918.

The Chartist period bequeathed to the working class the co-operative idea, more successful trade unions, and an international outlook. It introduced the workers as a struggling and advancing class into literature and political economy. Acquaintance with

Chartism considerably stimulated the growth of the intellectual system of Marx and Engels, made of John Stuart Mill an ethical socialist, and strongly influenced Disraeli, Kingsley, Carlyle, Maurice Ruskin and the Conservative or Christian Socialists in general.

The heritage of the Owenite-Chartist period was immense, and nobody has better described it than Marx in his Inaugural Address to the International Working Men's Association, which was founded ten years after the extinction of Chartism:

"After battling with the most admirable perseverance for thirty years, the English workers succeeded in getting the Ten Hours day. . . . The Ten Hours Bill was not only a great practical measure; it was the victory of a principle; it was the first time that in broad daylight the political economy of the middle class succumbed to the political economy of the working class. A still greater victory over the political economy of the possessors awaited the political economy of Labour. We refer to the co-operative movement, especially the factories based on the principle of co-operation which were brought into existence by a few 'despised' and unsupported hands.'"

Labour struggles and sufferings are never in vain. If they do not directly achieve their object, they prepare the way for eventual victory.

X

FRANCE
(1830—1848)

1. The Citizen Monarchy

THE opposition to the feudal-clerical Government, which had been growing in volume since 1827, caused King Charles X to resort to repressive measures. On the 25th July, 1830, he signed three ordinances, which abolished freedom of the Press, watered the franchise, and declared invalid the latest elections of opposition candidates. These three measures were the last nails in the coffin of the Bourbons. The Opposition summoned the workers to the barricades, and during the "glorious three days" (27th to 29th July) Charles X was overthrown. But instead of the Republic, for which the Parisian workers had bled, there came the Orleanist citizen monarchy in the person of Louis Philippe (1830—1848), and financial interests dominated the Government.

"After the July Revolution," wrote Marx,[1] "when the liberal banker, Lafitte, accompanied his crony, the Duke of Orleans, in triumph to the Hotel de Ville, he uttered these words: 'Henceforth the bankers will rule.' Lafitte had betrayed the secret of the Revolution. It was not the French bourgeoisie which ruled under Louis Philippe, but a fraction of them —the bankers, the Bourse kings, the railway kings, the owners of coal and iron mines and forests, a portion of the landed property which rallied round them, the so-called aristocracy of finance. . . . The proper industrial bourgeoisie formed a part of the official opposition, that is, it was only represented as a minority in the Chamber."

During the reign of the citizen king the economic transformation which had been retarded by the Napoleonic wars and the Bourbon restoration was vigorously proceeded with, and the means of production and of communication were developed on capitalist lines. Compared with the results of English industrial progress, those of French industrial progress were not impressive, but they exercised a strong influence upon social and economic thought and the Labour movement.

[1] "Class Struggles in France."

Expressive in this respect is the motto which Pecqueur, the most eminent social writer of that time, affixed to the title-page of his " Economie sociale " (Paris, 1839), " La vapeur est à elle seule, une revolution memorable " (" Steam alone constitutes a memorable revolution ").

The construction of railways and of steamers and other ships, the increase in coal and iron production, the boom in home industry and foreign trade, the very considerable increase in joint-stock companies, the scramble for colonies, were all distinct symptoms of the progress of the industrial revolution.

For the time being this transformation only wrought injury to the workers and the small traders. Without political rights and economically helpless, with a State in the hands of a financial aristocracy which exploited the nation and brutally suppressed every attempt at rebellion, the masses were delivered up to misery. Long hours of labour, miserable wages, high indirect taxes, and political discontent which was fostered by the oppositional section of the intellectuals and the lower middle class, rendered the labouring population of the great towns and of the centres of industry susceptible to insurrectionary projects and socialistic ideas.

From 1830 to 1839 the various towns of France witnessed a whole series of republican and socialistic revolts and conspiracies, and from 1837 to 1848 France became in a growing measure a fruitful soil for the most varied socialistic ideas and proposals. Novelists and romantic poets, theologists and jurists competed with each other to demonstrate the untenability of the capitalist system and to condemn the existing order—as Jean Reybaud complained in the year 1843 (in the first chapter of his " Etudes sur les reformateurs," 11, Paris, 1843). This was the year of Karl Marx's arrival in Paris.

2. The Class Division into Bourgeoisie and People

The social result of this economic development was the division of society into two classes, which were commonly known as the Bourgeoisie and the People. In his " Histoire de dix ans " (1830—1840), which appeared in 1841, Louis Blanc says: " By the term bourgeoisie, I understand the whole of the citizens who, possessing either instruments of production or capital, labour with their own resources, and are only dependent on others to

a certain extent. The people is the whole of the citizens who, possessing no capital, are completely dependent upon others for the necessities of life."

This class division was so familiar that in a petition of workers to the Chamber of Deputies (3rd February, 1831) the worker, Charles Béranger, declared: . . . "There are probably but few of you who have not heard speak of the people. The people is the whole of those who work, who are robbed of their social existence, who possess nothing; you know whom I mean: the proletariat." (Octave Festy, "Mouvement Ouvrier," 1830—1834, Paris, 1908, p. 82.) At that time the people and the proletariat were synonymous terms. (Compare in Festy's book Enfantin's criticism of the July Revolution: "the people or the proletariat fought on the barricades, but after the victory the bourgeoisie armed against the proletariat," pp. 36-7.)

The establishment of this fact is important for the following reason. If the people and the proletariat were at that time synonymous ideas, the rule of the people or democracy would actually signify proletarian rule, or the rule of the working class, and not, as democracy is understood to-day, the rule of the

whole nation in opposition either to oligarchy or personal monarchy. In the years 1831—1848 democracy signified the rule of the people in opposition to the bourgeoisie.

It is only by virtue of this historic background that we can understand the otherwise incomprehensible—because apparently contradictory—passage in the "Communist Manifesto": "The first step in the Labour Revolution is the elevation of the proletariat to the position of ruling class, the struggle for democracy." Democracy in the sense of the "Communist Manifesto" accordingly means the rule of the working class.

Friedrich Engels went still further and said roundly: "Democracy, that is to-day communism . . . With the exception of those people who do not count, in the year 1846 all European democrats are more or less pure communists." ("Literary Remains," vol. 2, p. 405.)

Let us now continue our survey of the socialist history of the period.

3. Secret Conspiracies and Revolts

It has already been mentioned that, even under the Restoration, movements sprang into existence, partly of a liberal, partly of a

democratic character, which formed secret organizations and aimed at overthrowing the Bourbons and restoring the sovereignty of the nation. The type of these organizations was that of the Carbonari: an Italian conspiracy against the alien rulers. The tactics of the Carbonari was armed revolt; it was the duty of every Carbonaro to have a rifle and fifty cartridges in constant readiness, to assemble on a given signal, and place himself under the orders of the leader. A number of Parisian students under the leadership of Bazard and Buchez formed the secret organization of the "Amis de la Verité" (Friends of Truth), with the object of establishing democratic conditions. On joining the league every member was obliged to swear the following oath: "I swear to exert all my strength to render victorious the principles of freedom, equality, and hatred of tyranny. I promise to spread the love of equality wherever I may have influence." Bazard and Buchez were then students of medicine, and they were also the first among the younger generation to be attracted by socialist ideas. Bazard was, as we have already shown, the best expounder of Saint-Simonism.

The French Carbonari put themselves into

communication with Buonarotti, who from Brussels spread amongst them the ideas of the Babeuf conspiracy. Louis August Blanqui joined this movement about the year 1825. On the whole, however, these movements bore partly a Liberal middle-class and partly a democratic-republican character. After the July Revolution (1830) the middle class elements fell away, and their place was taken by the working people of Paris and of a few of the industrial centres, who co-operated with the democratic-republican elements in the latter's secret organizations, of which, however, the proletarian-communist element, the most energetic section of the working class, formed the storm troops under Blanqui's leadership.

Between August, 1830, and May, 1839, we find in France four great secret organizations in succession: *Amis du peuple* (The People's Friends), *Droits de l'homme* (The Rights of Man), *Société des Familles* (Society of Families), and *Société des Saisons* (Society of the Seasons). Some of the British Chartists were either members of those associations or were in communication with them.

After the year 1839 there were still some smaller secret organizations, which called

themselves *Nouvelles Saisons* (The New Seasons), but did not play any considerable part, as they lacked the assistance of Blanqui and Buonarotti: the latter was dead; the former languished in prison from 1839 to 1848. Most of the leading personalities of these secret organizations: Flocon, Raspail, Marrast, Barbés, Caussidière, etc., we meet with as leaders of the February Revolution (1848), either as middle class republicans, or as socialists and communists.

The progress from middle-class democratic ideas to proletarian-communistic agitations was effected gradually, and it was accelerated both by Buonarotti's influence and by the elemental revolts of the Lyons weavers in 1831 and 1834, which were provoked partly by starvation wages and partly by republican and socialist ideas, only to be suppressed with bloodshed by the middle-class government, through the Liberal statesman, Thiers—by the same Thiers who organized the slaughter of the Communards in 1871. The *Amis du peuple* and the *Droits de l'homme* were still preponderantly of a middle-class and democratic character, or addicted to republicanism and social reforms; the *Familles* and the *Saisons,* on the other hand, were proletarian

and communistic. In the two latter associations the German communists Weitling, Schapper, Bauer, and other members of the London German Labour Educational Union, which later formed the nucleus of the Communist League, became acquainted with revolutionary communism. Buonarotti and his book exercised a very strong influence over the above-mentioned French secret organizations, in which the idea of revolutionary dictatorship first developed, whence it was taken over by Weitling and the Communist League.

In the admission of new members to the "Society of Families" the following questions were put to the candidate, and were answered by him in the following manner:

"What do you think of the Government?" "The Government functions in the interest of a small number of privileged persons." "Who are the aristocrats nowadays?" "The financial magnates, the bankers, the exchange speculators, the monopolists, the great landlords—in short, the exploiters." "By what right does the Government exist?" "By the right of force." "What is the ruling vice of society?" "Avarice, the lust for money, which has taken the place of all virtues;

the worship of wealth, contempt for and persecution of the propertyless." "Who is the people?" "The whole of the workers; their position is that of slaves; the fate of the proletariat is not different from that of serfs or blacks." "What ought the basis of society to be?" "Social equality; the rights of citizens are an assured existence, free education, participation in the government; the duties of citizens are devotion to society, brotherhood towards fellow citizens." "Will the next revolution be a political or a social one?" "A social one." "Could the people govern by itself after its victory in the revolution?" "As society is morally diseased, heroic measures are necessary in order to establish healthy conditions without delay; for some time the people must have a revolutionary government."[1]

A revolutionary government at that time signified a communist dictatorship.

"The Society of the Seasons" was of a still more pronounced proletarian-communistic character. Its attempted revolt of May, 1839, in which German members such as Weitling and Schapper also took part, ended in failure.

[1] De la Hodde, "Histoire des sociétés sécrètes," 1850, p. 199 et seq.

It is probable that the Chartist rising in 1839 was planned in connection with this Paris rising. The French leaders, Blanqui and Barbés, were imprisoned and condemned to death, which was commuted to penal servitude for life.

Marx, who was acquainted with this organization and its activity, made the following comments:

"It is notorious that up till 1830 the Liberal bourgeoisie took the lead in all conspiracies against the Restoration. After the July Revolution their place was taken by the republican bourgeoisie. The proletariat, which had been educated in conspiring under the Restoration, came to the fore in the degree that the republican bourgeoisie were frightened away from conspiracies by futile street fighting. The Société des Saisons, with which Barbés and Blanqui made the revolt of 1839, was already exclusively proletarian. . . ." On the whole Marx considers "that a section of the proletariat will no longer be adequate to the tasks of the modern revolution, which can only be carried out by the whole proletariat."[1]

[1] "Literary Remains of Marx and Engels," Vol. 3, pp. 428, 433.

4. August Blanqui

The most eminent figure during this period is August Blanqui. Acute intelligence, great knowledge, piercing and concise eloquence, absolute fearlessness, unbounded devotion to the cause of the workers, for whom he spent the best years of his life in prison and in exile and was physically maltreated by police and gendarmerie, made Blanqui a figure of heroic proportions. He was born in 1805 at Puget-Ternier; his father was the sub-prefect; his brother the famous economist, Adolf Blanqui. After attending the grammar school, he went to the University in Paris, where he studied medicine and law, and at the same time joined the secret political-revolutionary conspiracies of Bazard and Buchez. In 1827 he took part in his first street fight, when he was wounded and arrested. At the end of 1829 he joined the editorial staff of the "Globe," a left-wing Liberal, and later Saint-Simonian journal. In 1830 he took part in the barricade fighting of the July Revolution. Disappointed at its result, he attached himself to the *Amis du peuple,* and was involved in their trial in 1832, on which occasion he declared to the judges: "This is a question

of a struggle between the rich and the poor, in which the former are the aggressors; the privileged fatten on the sweat of the poor. Parliament is only a machine which catches up twenty-five millions of peasants and five millions of workers into its wheelwork, squeezes the blood out of them in order to divert it into the veins of the rich. The taxes are a robbery perpetrated by the idlers upon the working classes." He was condemned to a year's imprisonment. In the *Droits de l'homme* he formed the left wing, and he was the leader of the *Société des Familles.* For these activities he was arrested and sentenced to two years' imprisonment. Liberated in 1837 by the general amnesty, he led the *Saisons,* and on the 12th May, 1839, attempted a revolt, when he was arrested, and, as already mentioned, condemned to death, which sentence was commuted to lifelong imprisonment, from which he was freed by the February Revolution, 1848.

On arriving at Paris, he strongly condemned the temporary coalition which was formed at that time, and advocated a purely socialist and revolutionary government, which should govern dictatorially for some time, and by means of appropriate reforms—secular

schools, free education, co-operative societies, social reforms—should gradually prepare the people for a republican and communist society. "For communism cannot be introduced by a decree; it can only be gradually realized by years of education and training. . . . The revolution in itself changes neither men nor conditions; it only affords the opportunity for administrative and economic reforms. When the revolution is victorious, the judges and higher officials should be dismissed, and the intermediate and lower officials should be retained on probation. A *dictature parisienne* should assume direction of the business of government until the country was ripe for democracy, the Republic and co-operative economy. The chief factor in a revolution is the seizure of political power and its employment in the interest of educational and social reforms. The revolutionaries should steer clear of all Utopias, for the Utopists are mostly politically reactionaries."[1] Blanqui was an admirer of Marx, whose "Misère de la philosophie" (directed against Proudhon) he read with delight.[2]

[1] L. A. Blanqui, "Critique sociale," Paris, 1885, Vol. 1, pp. 173—220.

[2] "Marx-Engels Letters," Stuttgart, 1913, Vol. 4, p. 140.

On account of his activity against the sham-Republican National Assembly (May, 1848), he was condemned to ten years' imprisonment. In 1869 he endeavoured to exploit the discontent with Napoleon III, in favour of the republican form of government. During the war of 1870 he remained at first in Paris, where he edited a journal, " Patrie en danger." In February, 1871, he left Paris, after stigmatizing in a pamphlet the leading men of the new Republic as reactionaries and traitors; he then joined his sister in the country, where he was arrested by the Versailles Government, which prevented him from taking part in the Paris Commune, although the latter offered the Versaillese to exchange him for a number of hostages. As Marx said in his " Civil War," the Versaillese knew that they would thereby have presented the Commune with a head. Blanqui then barely escaped the death sentence of a court martial. He was banished, and it was not until the general amnesty in 1879 that he returned to Paris, where he edited the journal " Ni dieu ni maître " (Neither God nor Master). In ripe old age this chained Prometheus died in Paris on the 1st January, 1881.

5. Socialists and Social Reformers: Pecqueur, Proudhon, Cabet, Leroux, Blanc

Whereas the leading spirits of the proletariat were revolutionary and sought to realize their social and economic aims through the seizure of political power, the intellectual world of Socialism at that period (1830—1840) reflects a thoroughly peaceful and evolutionary character: the proletariat plays no active part in it: the workers being only objects of commiseration, sympathy and benevolence. French Socialism at this time is either ethical and religious or Utopian (system-building).

It seemed as if the proletariat and Socialism have nothing to do with each other. On the one side were Buonarotti and Blanqui as proletarian and revolutionary communists, on the other side the ethical, religious and Utopian Socialists and social reformers. Most of these Socialists and social reformers were eminent and influential writers, but they were either under the influence of the Saint-Simonians and Fourierists, or were circumscribed in their outlook by lower middle-class ideas. As Saint-Simonians or Fourierists, they looked for social progress from the development of capitalism,

from the benevolence of capitalists and of the State, or they sought to extricate the small business man from his embarrassments through the creation of cheap and irredeemable paper money and the exclusion of the middleman and the State bureaucracy (fiscal system).

The most eminent Saint-Simonian after Bazard was Constantin Pecqueur (1801—1887); he is also relatively the most original amongst the French Socialists of that epoch. His best work is " Economie Sociale " (Paris, 1839), which deals with the influence of the steam engine upon commerce, industry, agriculture and civilization in general. The work, which appeared in two volumes, was a prize essay in answer to the question put by the French Academy of Moral and Political Sciences as to the civilizing influence of steam, railways and steamships. Pecqueur received the prize, although the Academy was unable to concur in his socialistic conclusions. He is quite enthusiastic about the achievements of modern technology, in which he perceives a means (1) of increasing wealth through the co-ordination of scattered undertakings, (2) of promoting equality and brotherhood, inasmuch as modern means of transport bring people closer together, compelling them to labour in

common, and making them dependent on the rendering of mutual services: "In a word, association and all social effects flow from this source" (Vol. 1, p. 80). The steam engine in the factory and the locomotive on the trade routes introduce order, system and cohesion into the anarchy, absence of system, and incoherence that have hitherto prevailed. Watt and Stephenson have made an end of the dispersion and atomization, and created common labours and services (Vol. 1, pp. 64-95), so that the general tendencies of our age are association: centralization through the disappearance of small undertakings, small houses, and individual businesses, and also through the establishment of joint stock companies; in the year 1838 the shares of 860 native companies of this kind were quoted on the Paris Bourse (Vol. 1, p. 88). "The assemblage of a large number of workers under one and the same roof is the necessary consequence of the amalgamation of capital and the co-ordination of various branches of related industries, and the concomitant disappearance of the small workshop and small centres of industry. . . . All the influences of isolation and of private life melt away before the influences of public life. In this

new type of production is concealed an industrial, moral and political revolution (p. 63). The real improvement in social life consists in the gradual socialization of the sources of wealth, of the instruments of labour, of the conditions of general welfare" (Introduction, Vol. 1, p. vii). All that lies in the past and the present seems to be striving for the socialization of the instruments of labour, that is, the withdrawal of the land and raw materials from the ownership of individuals and their gradual transformation into common property, which shall be indivisible, inalienable, social and collective: "We are moving towards this condition slowly and indirectly, by the devious and unknown paths of unalterable necessity, of the power of circumstances; we are moving thence through religion, politics, social reforms, and the changes in the industrial mechanism; and by traversing all these paths we shall arrive at institutions, which will organize socialization, and formulate and decree this principle as a social law, as the supreme law of the future economic constitution" (II, pp. 12-13). But the process of socialization depends in the last resort, not upon material factors, but upon the moral rebirth of man, by virtue of which he

will be enabled to substitute devotion to the common weal for pursuance of his own interests. An alteration in the motive of labour is necessary. Moreover, the whole question of socialization is a religious and moral question (II, 24-25); love of man must spring from love of God. Providence has for long been guiding men to this moral level. The middle class, laborious, striving, energetic and capable, is becoming richer and more cultivated; the more it progresses in this direction, the more it will be disposed to mete out to the workers better wages and better treatment; it will offer the workers a share in the profits (II, 233, 132). To be sure, certain drawbacks are attached to the new inventions: the owners of the new machines at first regarded themselves as monopolists and privileged persons. But these drawbacks are temporary. "Providence will make it clear enough, through the political and moral developments which it will impose upon its opponents at the proper times, how socialization may best be accomplished, that is, how the machines may be employed for the benefit of the whole of society" (I, 451). Pecqueur was also an enthusiastic advocate of peace among nations and of international arbitration.

The whole bent of his mind was that of the optimistic Free Trader, and it was only his acquaintance with Saint-Simonism and Fourierism that made him a socialist. His works are illumined by a benevolent, humane, and finely cultivated spirit. He is probably the author of the word "socialization," which occurs very frequently in his works. Pecqueur's ideal was an ethical-socialist order of society: "a republic of God."

Much more noisy and active, but by no means so erudite and lofty, was the influence of his contemporary, P. J. Proudhon. He was born in Besancon, the birthplace of Fourier, and was as boastful and conceited as was the latter. Although born of poor parents, he enjoyed a good schooling, and attended the grammar school, albeit somewhat irregularly, until his nineteenth year. Not until his twentieth year was he taught printing, and then he became a proof reader and began to write, at first as a philologist, and then as a social critic. In 1840 he published his most famous work: "What is Property?" to which he gave the answer "Property is robbery." In 1846 he published in two volumes his "Economic Contradictions or the Philosophy of Poverty," which Marx answered in his

" Poverty of Philosophy." In 1844 and 1845 both of them became acquainted in Paris, and had long discussions upon social and philosophical problems. In 1848 Proudhon revealed the solution of the social problem : the establishment of a peoples' bank, where producers would be able to receive cheap or gratis credit and exchange their products on the basis of value for value. This piece of writing made him famous in Paris, and offered him the opportunity of being elected to the National Assembly at the next elections (June, 1848). Afterwards he edited a periodical, and published several pamphlets and books, on account of which he was persecuted by the reaction. He died in Paris in 1865.

Proudhon was more of a controversialist than a systematic thinker. His leading ideas may be summarized somewhat in the following manner : The institution of property is unjust and harmful; the mere fact of possessing a piece of land does not create a right of property therein. Nor does labour establish this right, for nobody has made the soil. Moreover, experience shows that labour does not lead to the possession of property, inasmuch as the workers are poor. Only those things which a person has created with his own labour are

legitimate possessions (in contradistinction to property). But under the property system exchange is not effected between equal values. With his wages the worker can never buy back the wealth that he has created; the owner of property (of the means of production) appropriates a portion of the product of alien labour in the form of rent, interest and profit. To remove this injustice neither socialism nor communism is required, but the establishment of a society in which the producers are enabled to exchange the products of their labour for equivalent units of value. The artisans ought to be able to produce their commodities independently, for which they should receive cheap credit from the Peoples' Bank which they will have established, and then they would exchange their products with each other on the basis of equal values. Mutual credit and the exchange of equivalent values. Such a society as this would need no State, but complete personal liberty and equality. In short, his system is mutualism combined with anarchy. Its character is *petit bourgeois,* inasmuch as it ignores the whole development of capitalism—a development which exhibits a strong tendency towards association and centralization, as Pecqueur accurately observed.

Now for the less important figures. Etienne Cabet (1788—1856), advocate and general procurator in Corsica (1830) was originally a middle-class republican. Persecuted by the citizen monarchy, he was elected by the opposition to the Chamber, where he boldly championed his convictions. Condemned to imprisonment in 1834, he fled to London, where his observation of the Owenite movement and his study of Thomas More's "Utopia" made him a communist. On returning to France, he wrote in 1842 his Utopian romance, "A Voyage to Icaria," which was much read and greatly contributed to the spread of communistic ideas.

Pierre Leroux (1797—1871) was the first genuine worker who became a Saint-Simonian (in 1824). A compositor by trade, he founded the "Globe," and later abandoned Saint-Simonism, when he became a mystical-religious social reformer, and exercised a certain influence upon George Sand, who was then writing so-called socialistic romances.

Louis Blanc (1811—1882) was essentially a publicist. His historical works were very popular. As a social democrat he was widely known through his small book, "Organisation du Travail" (1839—1840). The organization

of labour became the slogan of the February Revolution (1848). After sharply condemning competition as the source of modern poverty, Blanc proposed the nationalization of railways and mines, and the establishment of labour co-operative production associations with State assistance. In 1848 Blanc played an important part. His ideas were revived during the German March Revolution. They were so popular that Lassalle adopted them, and later made them the constructive part of his agitation.

6. February Revolution of 1848

The serious study of the events of the February Revolution of 1848 is far more important for revolutionaries and workers than that of any previous revolution. Since February, 1848, the proletariat has occupied a place on the stage of history, with its claims to exercise power in politics and economics. The inception, development and end of this revolution contain for us profound lessons both for the present and the future. It exhibits notable parallels to the German November Revolution of 1918. The growing Republican and lower middle-class opposition, the orgies

of finance, the corruptibility of high dignitaries, the wide diffusion of socialistic-evolutionary ideas, the bad harvests of 1845 and 1846, the commercial crises and high prices of 1847—all these factors combined to bring the citizen monarchy into discredit. A section of the middle-class and lower middle-class of Paris summoned the workers to the barricades. On the 24th February, 1848, they answered the call and after a number of collisions with the military the Revolution triumphed. The King fled, the crowds streamed in front of the editorial buildings of the opposition newspapers, the "National" and the "Reforme," where a list of the Provisional Government was compiled and approved by the "people" who were standing outside. At first the Republicans desired a purely middle-class government, but stark fear of the barricade fighters constrained them to take into the Ministry the Socialists, Louis Blanc and Albert (the latter a workman). At the head of the Government was Lamartine, a poet, orator and "Republican," but not a Socialist. He and his colleagues intended immediately to betray their "ideal," and delayed the proclamation of the Republic, but the threat of the Parisian workers, expressed

by Raspail, caused the new rulers to proclaim the Republic on the 25th February. Likewise the workman, Marche, extorted from the Government the concession of the "right to work"—with a loaded pistol in his hand, Marche stood before Lamartine until this right had been formulated and written down by Louis Blanc. This demand played a part at that time similar to that played by socialization in the German November 1918 Revolution. Desiring to get Louis Blanc and Albert away from the Government, the Ministry appointed a Labour Commission to sit in the Palais Luxembourg. This commission was directed by Blanc and Albert, and Pecqueur acted as its secretary. In order to give practical effect to the right to work, National Workshops were organized for the express purpose of discrediting the workers' demands and showing the socialist ideas to be hare-brained. Meanwhile the Government organized an armed power to keep in check and eventually suppress the workers flushed with victory and replete with demands. As mentioned above, August Blanqui was already in Paris; he saw through the plans of the Provisional Government and demanded that it should be purged and replaced by a socialist government, which should rule

dictatorially for some time and prepare the country for reforms. The Provisional Government, however, appealed to its democratic principles and demanded the summoning of a National Assembly on the basis of general suffrage. The social democratic elements, captivated by this proposal, supported the Government and combated Blanqui and his communistic following. Henceforth the Government had an easy task; it reinforced the armed power—ostensibly against the communists, in reality against the proletariat, and when Blanqui organized a great demonstration on the 16th April, 1848, for the purpose of overthrowing the Provisional Government and replacing it by a socialist government, the Provisional Government managed, with the help of Social Democrats, to inoculate the public and the armed power with fear of Communism. On the 16th April an imposing and unarmed demonstration commenced moving through the streets of Paris. Banners bore the inscriptions: "Abolition of exploitation of man by man!" "Right to Work!" "Organization of Labour!" But the word that had gone forth from the Government that it was not against the workers and socialists, but only against the Communists—this artful

suggestion—resulted in the armed forces receiving the demonstration with the cry: "Down with the Communists!" The Social-Democrats and lower middle-class Republicans, filled with fear of Communism, joined in the cry and frustrated the object of Blanqui's undertaking. The immediate consequence of these proceedings was a strengthening of the reaction. At the end of April the elections to the National Assembly took place, when all the socialist candidates failed, and in the course of which several workers were killed.

The Provisional Government abdicated, praised by the bourgeoisie, condemned by all communistic and social-revolutionary elements. Of uncommon interest is the opinion expressed by Heine.

"The lamentable course of the Revolution is to be ascribed to the faithless mandatories of the people, who frittered away, through their clumsiness, their cowardice or their duplicity, the great act of popular sovereignty which invested them with the most unlimited power. . . . Right in the first hours of the Provisional Government, even bestowing this name upon it, the vacillation of the little men was manifest. This name, 'Provisional Government,' officially announced its timidity

and annulled in advance anything that it might be able to do. Never has the people, the great orphan, pulled more miserable blanks out of the lucky-bag of the Revolution than those persons were who formed that Provisional Government. Among them were wretched comedians who resembled to the colour of a hair those heroes of amateur theatricals whom Shakespeare introduces to us so delightfully in his 'Midsummer Night's Dream.' These brave comrades, in fact, were afraid of nothing so much as that they might be taken seriously, and Schnock, the carpenter, assured the people in advance that he was no real lion, but only the provisional lion, only Schnock the carpenter, that the public need not tremble at his roaring, as it was only a provisional roaring" (Heine, Deutschland, p. 242).

On the 4th May the National Assembly met and formed a purely middle-class government. Eleven days later Blanqui utilized a demonstration arranged in favour of Poland and Italy and a "democratic foreign policy" to place himself at its head and to lead it before the Chamber of Deputies. He penetrated into the Chamber, insisted on speaking, reminded the rulers that they had only the sacrifice of the workers to thank for their positions of power,

that the new Government was engaged in foreign policy with Russia and Austria, and was making no attempt to bring to justice the murderers of the slain French workers, and that their proper task was to occupy themselves with social problems. Blanqui's intervention united for a time all socialistic elements, and a list of ministers was drawn up in which all socialist tendencies were represented. But it was all too late. The reaction was already seated in the saddle and grasped the sword firmly in the hand. The new Government dismissed the Luxembourg Commission, dismantled the National Workshops, advised the unemployed to enter the army or return to the countryside; they provoked the masses to such a point that the latter resorted to rebellion in the last week of June. The streets of Paris were covered with barricades and filled with fighters. The Republican General, Cavaignac, led the troops, and after a three days' battle the proletarian revolution was drowned in the blood of its bravest fighters. The republican or democratic bourgeoisie slew the real Republicans and prepared the way for Louis Napoleon, who got himself elected President of the French Republic, in order to seize dictatorship through

the coup d'état on the 2nd December, 1851, and a year later grasped the Imperial crown. Meanwhile August Blanqui was in prison, Louis Blanc and most of the Social Democrats found themselves in exile in order to escape prison. Thus the February Revolution ended with a terrible defeat thanks to the disunion and the revolutionary inexperience of the Socialists and workers.

INDEX

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